



WARLOCK OF THE MAGUS WORLD

BOOK 09

Wen Chao Gong

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

Warlock of the Magus World

(巫界术士)

by

Wen Chao Gong

(文抄公)

Synopsis

-What happens when a scientist from a futuristic world reincarnates in a World of Magic and Knights?

An awesome MC is what happens!

A scientist's goal is to explore the secrets of the universe, and this is exactly what Leylin sets out to do when he is reincarnated.

Dark, cold and calculating, he makes use of all his resources as he sets off on his adventures to meet his goal.

Face? Who needs that... Hmmm... that guy seems too powerful for me to take on now... I better keep a low profile for now.

You want me to help you? Sure... but what benefit can I get out of it? Nothing? Bye.

Hmmm... that guy looks like he might cause me problems in the future.

Should I let him off for now and let him grow into someone that can threaten me..... Nahhh. kill-

Copyright

All rights reserved.

English Translation by Ying @ [Wuxiaworld](#)

Translation Edit by Alanade, Snapdragon @ [Wuxiaworld](#)

ePub conversion by Lisa Hayes @ [Hasseno Blog](#)

This is a free eBook. You are free to give it away (in unmodified form) to whomever you wish.

No part of this eBook may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the author.

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

Chapter 801 - Spellbook

A wizard's advancement required large amounts of time and energy, and the difficulty of advancing increased the further one walked the path. Two years had passed, and yet Leylin's ranking as a wizard had only risen by one. However, his speed far surpassed his peers and was a huge motivation for Ernest.

"Although I'll get an additional spell slot after I advance to rank 6, I won't be able to reach a deeper level of the Weave... What a pity. If not for that I could've gotten a rank 3 spell slot and had a greater chance of victory..." Leylin looked at his stats, his eyes full of regret.

Wizards were ranked based on their achievements with the Weave. Only rank 7 wizards could make contact with the third level, and gain the authority to cast rank 3 spells.

Similar to rank 5 wizards who had just made contact with the second level of the Weave, rank 6 wizards could only use rank 2 spells as well. The difference was that they had greater spiritual force which meant that they had more spell slots. If Leylin could advance once more and have his spiritual force access the third level of the Weave, it would be a great advancement for him. However, his time was scarce.

When he noticed the question marks behind the rank zero spell slots, Leylin finally beamed. With a complete analysis of the rank 0 Weave, Leylin would never be limited by rank 0 spell slots and wouldn't even need materials when casting spells. He wouldn't forget spells either.

It could be said that Leylin could use the Weave anytime he wanted to cast rank 0 spells, and there was no need to prepare things like spell slots.

He had substituted the inflexible spell slots with his own mana, making it the only limit on his casting of rank 0 spells. As long as he had enough mana, he could cast as many rank 0 spells as he wanted.

“Perhaps I should prepare a rank 1 or 2 spell and reserve enough spiritual force for casting rank 0 spells...” Leylin muttered to himself. Being able to flexibly use rank 0 spells was the best trump card up his sleeve. If enemies tried to evaluate him based on the ranking system of wizards in the World of Gods, they would be in for a nasty surprise.

“I’ll memorise Web for a rank 2 spell, and Animate Rope and Mage Armour for rank 1. That would save me a lot of spiritual force...”

Leylin had an advantage in this aspect. Wizards prepared their spell slots a day in advance. After a night of restful meditation, most of his spiritual force would have been replenished until it was almost full. As a result, he could use more of his spiritual force. While he could only use rank 0 spells, it wasn’t half bad...

Leylin was flipping through an ancient spellbook. It was made of the leather from some animal skin; there were even traces of scales on it. Powerful magic emanated from the tome. This was

something Ernest had passed on to Leylin, a spellbook containing multiple low-ranked spells. Ernest himself used it quite often.

Wizards always forgot their spells. Once they stored one in a spell slot, all memories relating to it would become fuzzy, even vanish. It was necessary to relearn them again and again. Hence, a spellbook that recorded all the spells the knew became extremely important. In many situations, spellbooks were wizards' most valuable items.

This specific spellbook had been given to Leylin by Ernest, and had been made of the skin of a landwurm. It was worth hundreds of gold coins.

The paper in the spellbook seemed rather new, and did not match with the old cover.

Ernest had clearly taken the advantage to remove the spells he had recorded in there. Wizards recorded the spells that they were proficient in inside the spellbook, and it was a very important task for them to accomplish. This was something that they could not commission others to complete for them.

“Web, Animate Rope, as well as Mage Armour...” Leylin flipped through the spellbook and quickly found the relevant information.

Leylin placed less emphasis on spellbooks than other wizard. The A.I. Chip itself was a comprehensive collection of spellbooks, and the efficiency at which it transmitted spells to his memories far exceeded that of studying from paper.

Most of the time Leylin spent on this book was just to deceive Ernest or use it to learn spells. He could then compare the spells to those from the Magus world, appreciating the difference in the power of laws within them.

With his finger stroking a looping spell rune, Leylin immersed himself in the analysis of the spells.

“Compared to the spells of the Magus World, the magical circuits and nodes here are very simple. Wizards have to go through the Weave first, and it’s impossible to compare the complexity of these two types of spells. Simply put, Magus spell models require spiritual force to form an entire template for the spells, while the spell models here act more like keys...” With Leylin’s powerful learning abilities and memory, there was practically no difficulty in recording spell models here.

Within minutes, the A.I. Chip’s prompt sounded.

[Beep! Spells have been stored. Rank 2 spell slot: Web. Rank 1 spell slot: Mage Armour, Animate Rope!]

Leylin somehow felt like part of his spiritual force had disappeared. There were now three more nodes on the Weave, which represented the three spells he had remembered. Tomorrow, he could cast them using specific gestures or commands.

“Besides the convenience and speed, the plus point for wizards here is only that the requirements are less stringent when compared to Magi...” Once his spiritual force was completely extracted, Leylin found that the memories of the three spell models had disappeared without a trace.

‘Damn it, that greedy god!’ Leylin cursed inside in annoyance, but did not dare say it aloud. As a Magus, seeing how the wizards were made use of so thoroughly rendered him furious and frustrated.

In a bad mood, Leylin had no plans of studying the spellbook further. He instead sent a command out in his mind, ‘A.I. Chip, prepare for transmission of spell models: Web, Mage Armour, and Animate Rope!’

[Beep! Mission established. Beginning transmission...]

The A.I. Chip loyally carried out Leylin’s instructions, and soon enough Leylin found information related to these three spell models in his mind. The A.I. Chip raised his learning speed unfathomably.

“I’ll probably have to endure this cycle of preparing ammunition and enduring exploitation for a long while,” Leylin looked dejected, but he quickly sorted out his feelings, “Preparations of the spell slot are complete. I can try a counterattack now. Before that, I still have to take care of the matter with the god of

knowledge...”

After Leylin checked the strength he possessed, he began to assess other issues.

‘Bishop Tapris must have gotten information somewhere, but he might not be trying to eliminate our Faulen Family. After all, our family is made up of followers of the god of knowledge, and if they swapped another family in here, they might not be more suitable than us. However, it’s obvious that he’s trying to nudge us... We’ll need to yield for now and gain support from the church...’

All sorts of possibilities and sudden events flowed before Leylin’s eyes, the future revealing itself before him. The dim yellow light from the oil lamp stretched his shadow further and further...

Soon enough, it was the day of the celebration at the god of knowledge’s church. Leylin was clad in a fitting attire with an armless leather breastplate inside. There were two spell scrolls in there as well. It was not that the Faulen Family lacked better metallic armour, but metal often interfered with the flow of magic for wizards, causing their spell casting to fail. Unless they found precious metals like mithril or adamantine, wizards would not use metal tools.

“Morning, Cousin Isabel!” Leylin found a surprising figure at the entrance to the manor.

“Morning, Cousin Leylin!” Isabel was still wearing that tight-fitting armour. Coupled with her perfect body, she emitted a sense

of attractiveness and danger.

In reality, ever since their last meeting, Isabel had stayed hidden in her room. She had become very reclusive, and besides a few banquets this was the first time Leylin was truly seeing her.

“Are you going to the church of knowledge at the port?” Isabel rested against the doorframe, black sheath touching the ground, “It’s rather dangerous out there now. I want to go with you!”

“That’s my overbearing cousin!” It was only at this moment that Leylin felt his childhood playmate had returned.

“But!” He stepped forward slightly, causing Isabel to subconsciously grab the hilt of her sword. “I can handle these trivial matters myself!”

Seeing how she was prickly like a porcupine and was resisting the urge to draw her sword, Leylin wanted to laugh. While he would like to draw closer, it was not the time to give her more stress.

“Let’s go!” Leylin jumped onto the carriage. The one driving it was the rank 6 warrior Jacob, and along with his skilled shouts and the sounds of whipping, the carriage marked with the Faulen Family’s crest slowly went on its way.

“You idiot!” Behind him, Isabel was stamping her feet in annoyance, while a small blush appeared on her face.

“While my cousin has become very threatening towards strangers, she’s still the same person who is warm on the inside like before. Good...” In the carriage, Leylin laughed lightly. “But there seems to be some huge issue with her, especially that evil power. If it isn’t solved, I’m afraid...”

Chapter 802 - Celebration

Lively streams of people filled the bustling pier. The air was filled with the smell of sea and rum.

As the horse carriage entered the port, Leylin watched the busy scene outside through a little window within. Sailors, farmers, soldiers, adventurers, and all sorts of people entered his sights. They were quickly classified, marking those who had decent strength and harboured malicious intent.

As he had been immersed in the study of magic, Leylin rarely came out from the manor, much less came to this area. ‘It seems like the Faulen Family has managed this place extremely well; it even surpasses my expectations. It’s understandable that someone might covet this place.’

Leylin glanced towards the group next to the crossroad. A wandering bard was now performing there, and he could not help but exclaim in his surprise. “Hm? There are even bards wandering around!”

Bards in the World of Gods weren’t just street performers. They were usually spies that were primarily responsible for probing for intel, or they made a living out of selling information. Most importantly, they were usually very powerful.

With how much the Faulen Pier was flourishing, quite a few bards had come forth to perform or on vacation.

“Jacob, what’s the name of that bard? How long has he been here for?” Leylin enquired.

“That one? I heard that he’s called Xuno and comes from the faraway Northern Lands. His poems are always very pleasant to listen to and there are always interesting stories. The baron was even thinking about inviting him to perform in the manor some time ago...” Jacob answered quickly.

The commoners here quickly gave way and presented their greetings to the authority that managed the island and port. Sitting in the middle of the horse carriage, Leylin was however unperturbed by everyone’s reverence and instead furrowed his brows, “There are far too many people here, and yet the frequency at which the patrol appears is too low...”

“Jacob, how much strength does our family have?”

Jacob froze for a moment, surprised by Leylin’s question. “Are you referring to the patrol, young master?”

However, for someone like him who had once been the commander of this place, Jacob knew the situation with the patrol very well. “We have two groups here that come up to a hundred people total. They’re all great little guys with good strength.”

“Great little guys? Good strength? That means there aren’t any with exemplary strength, and they are only able to suppress those sailors and thieves?” Leylin grew speechless, “Out of this hundred, how many have professions? How much armour do we have? And

long-range weapons such as crossbows?”

In the World of Gods, where exemplary powers were suppressed to the utmost, armour and weapons were a huge factor when it came to strength. Troops with great equipment and training would find no trouble dealing with those with professions below rank 5. If there were enough of them, even those at rank 10 and below did not dare go head to head with soldiers.

Of course, after rank 10, numbers would not be enough to make up for the lack of quality.

“Professions? Armour? Crossbow?” Jacob’s surprised voice sounded in front of him.

“What? We don’t have them?” Leylin sighed.

“Professions? The leaders of those two groups are retired military officials that the baron recruited. They’re low ranked warriors who haven’t even been certified to rank 5. As for armour, those who are vice leaders and above all have one set, and there are a total of twelve. And crossbows... Our patrol doesn’t have equipment like that, though there seem to be a few stored in the manor...” Jacob looked a little flustered as he spoke.

“Too little, it’s much too little! This is too weak...” Leylin seemed to be complaining.

“Young Master, why do you say so?” A look of surprise appeared

on Jacob's face, "A Baron has over a hundred elite troops. Even in the kingdom, that power is equivalent to what a viscount can have... In order to bear the costs of this group, the baron throws in a large amount of his earnings..."

"Baron... this..." Leylin had a sudden realisation. The Faulen Island was a newly developed territory with no population. It was difficult to even get farmers to plow the lands here, not even considering recruiting troops.

If not for the Faulen Island being on an isolated piece of land, having to deal with numerous vicious pirates, Baron Jonas would long since have halved the number of troops here. In order to recruit enough people, there was no way but to hire them by offering large amounts of money, and he probably had to take care of their food and their families.

While the barons in the Dambrath Kingdom could have many troops, they never had so many unless it was wartime due to the great costs.

If not for the benefits from the trade, the Faulen Family would long since have gone bankrupt due to the army.

"The rise of a noble family is truly difficult..." Leylin sighed inside. The father of this body had gone through hundreds of battles, and with difficulty obtained this uninhabited island as his territory. With his hard work over half his life, Baron Jonas finally made this area a little popular, yet now his work was immediately coveted.

“If all of the hundred were to have equipment...” Leylin calculated it. Creating armour was extremely expensive in the World of Gods, and a complete set could even be a knight’s treasure passed on through generations. The value was equal to even a small manor. If modified by magicians or blessed by priests, the armour’s price would be even more terrifying and perhaps comparable to a city!

“It’s not practical to change the armour of the patrol, but I can think of something when it comes to their weapons. At the very least, they can’t use rusted metal...” Leylin sighed and clutched at his forehead.

He was no longer in his original body, where he was exceedingly wealthy. In the World of Gods, he spent only a few gold coins every month, and most of it was spent on spell materials.

‘There are ways for low-ranked magicians to earn money, but that’s mostly labour from copying spells or brewing low-ranked potions. There’s not enough time... Sigh, in the World of Gods, the small nobles don’t do that well. Only the churches are truly wealthy. The paladins of the church of the Goddess of Singing Waters all had a full set of metal armour, and some even had been blessed with divine spells...’

Leylin could not help but think back to what he had seen before as a soul seed. The wealth of the churches of the gods were renowned in the continent, especially that of the Goddess of Wealth. It was said that their headquarters had been built with gold and silver, and even the ground was paved with gold bricks.

Leylin, who was going insane over his poverty, had even decided to steal everything once he made his mark on this world.

“Then... Can I use them?” Suppressing the immoral thoughts he had, Leylin asked Jacob who was outside.

“Of course! As the next-in-line of the Faulen Family, the young master’s wish is our command!” Jacob answered resolutely, “Do you need me to send down the signal?”

“No, there’s no need to for now. I want to go to the church of knowledge, and it shouldn’t be too dangerous. Tell them...” Leylin spoke apathetically.

He added some more words on the inside, ‘You’re useless against priests or holy warriors. On top of that, few would be willing to fight against the church and god they believe in.’

After Leylin was done with his instructions, the carriage once more sank into silence. He did not continue speaking and only judged the terrain and buildings outside curiously.

As the carriage reached a spacious area, Jacob’s voice was heard, “Young Master, we’ve reached the Knowledge Shrine!”

Leylin looked outside the window. The streets were clean and tidy, and the passersby were very cultured. Whether it was farmers or soldiers walking past, all would control their footsteps such that they were softer, appearing prudent and reverent. Put next to the

bustle and chaos at the port, the two were practically worlds apart.

A lofty and majestic church emitted dazzling light through the carriage. The churches of the gods were always constructed splendidly, being beautiful and solemn,

“O god of knowledge...” Many voices could be heard saying their prayers.

As this was a day of celebration, many followers of the god of knowledge had congregated here. The spacious floor was crowded with people.

In order to worship the god of knowledge, Jonas had dedicated the best section of land on the port and did not accept even a copper coin. In the eyes of the priests however, this was a given.

“Seems like the ‘cultured people’ of the port are here!” Leylin sighed as he rubbed his face, changing his expression to a sunny one.

“Young Master Leylin!”

“Welcome, welcome!” “My, look who’s here!”

Many familiar faces crowded around. They included his uncles and aunts, and he had no choice but to smile and greet them one by one.

With Anthony as his mentor, Leylin had no faults when it came to his manners. What he showed off was his most perfect image as the next-in-line of a noble family, and everyone sang his praises.

The price, however, was that after the many greetings Leylin found his facial muscles had begun to stiffen, and much time had passed.

‘I know this is troublesome, but it’s necessary. Nobles...’ Leylin sighed as he entered the large shrine and threw a small bag of gold coins into the donation box. The pot-bellied priests beamed in reply.

Leylin looked around. The ornamentation of Oghma’s church wasn’t half bad. There were bookshelves and statues all around, and it was filled with a scholarly atmosphere...

Chapter 803 - Marquis Louis

After finishing his prayers in the main hall of the church, a few maids finally led the way to bishop Tapris.

Tapris was very frank the moment he started speaking, “My child, you seem to have run into some trouble!”

“Yes, respected Bishop. I urgently need teaching and guidance from the god of knowledge.” Leylin secretly grew a lot more relaxed just due to Tapris’ attitude. He was indeed like what Leylin had suspected, and only intended to take this opportunity to knock his family’s confidence. He didn’t have any plans to actually replace the Faulens.

If this was the case, foregoing a few benefits in exchange for his help was not a difficult issue for him to discuss.

Judging by his behaviour, Bishop Tapris must have also been nodding secretly to himself. As heir to the Faulen family, Leylin’s promises would have to be fulfilled even by Baron Jonas, and this was one made in a church with a deity as their witness.

‘It seems like Baron Jonas has an outstanding successor!’ Tapris thought slowly to himself, then looked at Leylin, “Dear little Leylin, have you heard of Viscount Tim?”

“Viscount Tim?” Leylin’s voice was filled with doubt. Under Anthony’s guidance, he certainly understood the upper class nobles of the Dambrath Kingdom, yet he hadn’t seemed to have

heard of any deeds performed by this viscount.

“Oh, look at me, getting ahead of myself! Viscount Tim was just crowned a few months ago, so it’s perfectly normal for you not to have heard of him before. His father, on the other hand, is a distinguished person you must have heard of before. Marquis Louis!”

Tapris watched Leylin’s expression expectantly.

“Marquis Louis? The king’s brother!” Leylin exhaled lightly. Although he knew that things wouldn’t be simple this time, he didn’t think that the nobles involved would have a direct connection to royalty.

The nobility was never a tight knit community. The power struggle between the regional and central nobles had never ceased for even a moment, and although there was a possibility of them uniting as one in the face of divine authority, an instinctive battle for benefit would begin once the moment the pressure from the outside world was reduced.

Within the kingdom, the regional nobles and the kingdom’s central nobles were the two factions that put up the fiercest fights.

“That’s right. Viscount Tim is already of age. Although he’s the second son, Marquis Louis adores him very much, and even wishes to obtain a piece of feudal property for him...” Tapris held his tongue, and left the rest to Leylin’s imagination.

“So that’s how it is!” Leylin nodded seriously. Although the king and his people ruled over the entire Dambrath Kingdom, they couldn’t possibly own all the territory. Moreover, after the division of property across the generations and the emergence of other noble families, the amount of territorial land that the king now governed directly was already quite small.

To date, all the territories in the kingdom had been divided until there was practically nothing left. Even if one was a prince or princess, if they were not particularly favoured by the king, they would not even receive any hereditary titles. The highest ranked titles they could receive was that of an [Count Palantine](#), or a Marquis, and they would only possess a few manors.

Non-hereditary title of high rank

As a brother to the king of this generation, Marquis Louis was still able to fish up a decent amount of benefits. The Baltic archipelago was his fief, and the total area of the whole stretch of islands far exceeded that of the Faulens. He even owned several decent deepwater ports.

To put it bluntly, even the Faulens had to rely on a tremendous volume of trade in the Baltic Archipelago and play second fiddle in order to toil for money.

However, Louis still had to consider his first son. It would be very foolish of him to divide his territory, and hence he had set his sights somewhere else. Perhaps he had now turned his gaze towards the Faulen’s territory

Stripping another noble family of their inherited territory for no reason would definitely send huge waves rippling through the circle of nobility. But if this family was extinguished with no successor and Marquis Louis had Tim carry on their family name, then things would be a lot easier. His influence as a marquis would also minimise the consequences of this incident.

“Many thanks for being straightforward, respected bishop. From now on, the church of knowledge will be fully accepted by the Faulen territory. Additionally, we will portion out another plot of territorial land in the eastern part of the island to offer as tribute to the church,” Leylin rose and gave his thanks.

Although this was only an intelligence report, he felt like the possibility of it being true was extremely high.

Firstly, the territory under the Faulen family actually did thin out Marquis Louis’ profits. Even though it was only by a little, it was enough to upset him. Secondly, the Faulens were a newly rising noble family, and they didn’t have complicated relationships with other nobles that would have been difficult to deal with. There were only minimal consequences associated with making his move on them.

‘Could it be that this is also a contest between the regional and central parties?’ Leylin had experienced much more trickery than this, and had depth in his foresight.

‘The Faulen Family started out with military service, and were the king’s imperial bodyguards from the beginning. Thus, they could be regarded as part of the central party. But ever since they

obtained their feudal property and arrived here, the family was actually already inclined towards the regional party. That was also how my father the baron handled it. However, what was awkward was that the people of the Faulen island had very little contact with the people from the mainland, as it was a lonely island situated far away. Hence, they haven't been accepted by the regional nobles yet... Which is the reason why this family is now in an awkward situation in which we cannot rely on either side...'

After thinking thoroughly about this, Leylin was suddenly struck by a huge realisation, 'No wonder. If I saw this situation, even I wouldn't be able to resist taking action. There are plenty of advantages, yet the risks are very minor. Perhaps Viscount Tim is also pitifully begging for this opportunity...'

In fact, Leylin's second guess was much closer to the truth than his first guess, but there were a few minor differences.

Although his opponent was just a viscount and seemed relatively less capable, he was backed by the marquis and was even the king's nephew. If one took their eyes off him for even a second, he would easily trigger chaos.

However, it was fortunate that he was just a favoured second son. Even Marquis Louis wouldn't spend much energy on him, much less alert the king. As long as he didn't kill his opponent, there probably wouldn't be much of a counterattack.

After all, when it came to issues like schemes to seize the territory of smaller families, because most of the bigger nobles did it on the sly, these rumours were restricted only to their thoughts,

and could not be spoken of in polite company.

Tapris personally sent Leylin out of the shrine. Just as Leylin was about to board his carriage, Tapris muttered softly in a deep voice next to his ear, “It seems that a surge of pirates have escaped to the vicinity recently. I hope you’ll take care! May the god of knowledge bless you.”

“Got it!” There was a glint in Leylin’s eyes, and he gave Tapris a profound look before boarding the carriage.

The body of the carriage kept rising and falling as the wheels rolled on. Leylin sat in the carriage with his eyes shut, yet his thoughts kept moving.

‘That cunning Bishop Tapris. Is he preparing to lay his bet on both parties?’ As a matter of fact, Leylin really did want to get assistance from the church this time. If he could personally exert pressure on the marquis with the power of the church of knowledge, the marquis would surely give up on making such moves.

But this was evidently impossible. Even Bishop Tapris did not own some labour headquarters for him to exert his authority. If they dispatched warriors and priests from the shrine, they would be deemed to be in favour of the Faulen family. Tapris had also clearly rejected doing so.

Now it seemed that although Tapris had only given a bit of the intel, he had managed to immediately gain a heap of profits. Even

if Baron Jonas was here, he wouldn't dare to go back on his word. If Viscount Tim succeeded, he wouldn't forget to rope in Tapris as well. If placing his bets on both parties would guarantee him profits, why wouldn't he?

Of course, it wasn't that there was no other way to obtain assistance from the church, but that would require dedicating all his territory to them. However, both sides would suffer and be destroyed indiscriminately if he used this method. Additionally, they would be boycotted by all the nobles from the mainland, and be seen as traitors by the nobles!

After weighing the matter, Leylin reached the conclusion that things hadn't escalated to such a nasty stage, and he didn't have the courage to abandon his social class. There was no doubt that he would use 'that' method.

"Pirates?" The look in Leylin's pupils seemed distant. Since the other party was also a noble family that controlled overseas trade and had numerous harbours, they evidently had a formidable maritime force.

Even the pirates nearby might be secretly under their control. It was highly possible for them to send out a group of men to cause a commotion in the Faulen Island and use this to create pressure, or even attack the manor directly and silence the Faulens. They did it once long ago anyway.

"Relying on the hundred man patrol to get rid of this wave of pirates is rather challenging..." Leylin stroked his chin. He had never underestimated his opponent's strength. With a marquis

backing him, that viscount could easily dispatch tens of professionals.

“Someone above rank 15 is absolutely impossible, but there might be one who is above rank 10, and a few elite professionals above rank 5... It won't be easy to defeat them...” Leylin quickly evaluated his opponent's strength, just at the most basic level.

Of course, the Faulens didn't only have the harbour patrol, but the real masters were definitely travelling with Baron Jonas. Only the the wizard Ernest had stayed behind to take care of things, but this source of help had also been dispatched by Leylin himself.

“The other party will obviously focus their main strength on the baron. The force they have sent over here should only be a small portion of their main force. It's not like we can't fight them with everything we have!” Leylin had a distant look in his eyes.

In fact, he had also considered cowering and hiding in some corner of the mainland, avoiding the situation at hand. He would then slowly accumulate skills and become a great wizard, maybe even a strong Legend. But putting aside the affection from the baron and his wife, even if he could heartlessly abandon everything he had, he was unable to give up on the benefits that the Faulen Family brought him.

A sea of resources was needed for a wizard to advance. Be it expensive materials for him to perform sorcery, or all kinds of magic books and such, a great amount of gold coins was required to purchase them. Without an influential power to gather wealth for him, Leylin would simply be incapable of meeting his needs alone.

Chapter 804 - Assassin

A great wizard could not rise without the support of an extremely influential power. It was a pipe dream to achieve such success alone. Were he to try to build up his power and wealth through underhanded means, he would obviously provoke many people.

In comparison, the Faulens had only met with a small inconvenience. Even if Leylin broke away from the family, he would still run into the same problem when trying to make a name for himself.

It was needless to say that his identity as a nobleman was rather decent. At least it allowed Leylin to travel unimpeded in any place where human civilization gathered. He couldn't bear to give that up.

With the speed at which his strength was improving, the Faulens would one day be unable to meet his demands, thus he had to expand the interests of the family.

If he ate more, others would have less to eat. Leylin had long predicted that the Baltic archipelago and the numerous natural ports owned by Louis' family would become stumbling blocks in his family's rise in society.

Even without this incident, the Faulens would one day become enemies with Marquis Louis. After growing aware of this, Leylin's gaze turned as cold as ice. 'If that's the case, I'll move those blocks away!'

“Compared to the rich and imposing maquis, the Faulen Family is simply not prepared as of now. Even if we emerge victorious in this incident, we are destined to keep a low profile. It would be best... Huh?”

Leylin’s eyes suddenly widened, ‘This energy undulation... A.I. Chip!’

[Beep! Task established, initializing scan... Suspicious person discovered in the vicinity! Gathering of high energy detected! Person is determined to be in possession of powerful explosives.]

The carriage seemed to have turned translucent in the A.I. Chip’s display, revealing the streets and people in the form of numerous lines. A few passersby were sneakily drawing closer to it, and they were marked out by the A.I. Chip.

“Are they assassins? Jacob...” Jacob was currently rushing the carriage along, but hearing Leylin’s voice stunned him for a moment.

“Don’t stop! Don’t show any signs of suspicion or panic. Let’s change direction!” Leylin’s command was transmitted to Jacob, yet it seemed like no else heard it.

Jacob stopped for a moment. He had already viewed voice

transmission as an ability unique to a wizard. Being experienced, he immediately knew what the young master had discovered.

Crack! The crisp sound of the horsewhip sounded. The carriage, which had been going forth, suddenly made a sharp turn, and entered another junction.

“They’re still following us? Hah... Did they vow not to give up until they achieved their goal?” Leylin could see the route that the assassins were taking through the A.I. Chip, and he couldn’t help but force a smile.

“Jacob, follow the route I’m about to give you.” As the young leader of the Faulen Pier, Leylin couldn’t allow its prosperous image to be damaged, come what may. If word got out about a heir to a noble family getting attacked in a ruckus at the port, it could be a huge blow to the port’s prestige. Many of the less influential merchants would be afraid of getting into trouble, and would rather take a detour than come back again to replenish their supplies. Hence, although Leylin had already discovered the assassins, he couldn’t take action in the middle of the city centre.

Jacob clearly knew this as well, and firmly followed the route that Leylin gave.

Under Leylin’s directions, the carriage swiftly drove out of the market as smoothly as a loach. They arrived at a small road in the countryside, and the assassins hurriedly surrounded them one by one.

“Are you ready? Jacob, break through their line of defense right away, and send a signal to gather the patrolling team!” Leylin appeared very confident.

“But young master, your safety!” Jacob was rather hesitant.

“That’s not an issue. Don’t forget that I’m a wizard, and someone stronger than you at that.” Leylin said without a trace of politeness.

Jacob’s face flushed red, as though he had recalled the few experiences when he had suffered defeat under Leylin’s hands, “Your wish is my command, young master!”

At this moment, a few shadows that appeared to be highly bewildered pounced on them. They had evidently realised that they had been fooled by Leylin earlier on at the port. Their fury even led to them drawing out their murder weapons immediately.

“Are these the bombs of a goblin alchemist?” Leylin shook his head in disapproval as he saw a few jet black objects launched towards the carriage.

If they were attacked by these prohibited items with such immense power in the port, even if Leylin himself wouldn’t suffer the slightest damage, Jacob would definitely sustain injuries or even die, much less the civilians involved.

But now they were in the wilderness. With a widened field of

view and Leylin's prior warning, even Jacob would be able to avoid it.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The violent explosion even caused the entire carriage to disintegrate into pieces, and numerous splinters shot all over the place.

But before this happened, two figures had jumped out of the carriage.

"One, two, three, four. There's still one more!" Leylin said to himself as he noticed the four figures surrounding him.

He had detected five people through the A.I. Chip, but now it seemed that there was another fellow hiding in the darkness, who was evidently their leader.

"Quick, leave!" Leylin turned around and yelled at Jacob, who had a few traces of blood on his body. He was clearly affected by the explosion just now. "The power of the alchemical bombs are not bad, but unfortunately they are prohibited items. Even if there was a channel to smuggle them, the quantity from before should be their limit."

"Young master, take care!" Jacob shouted loudly. His muscles were bulging, a sign that his fighting spirit had been aroused. With his hands clenched tight around a decapitator, he rushed swiftly in

the direction of the port.

“One of you, follow him! Don’t let him get away!” The four figures seemed to still be immersed in how it was a pity that the alchemical bombs earlier weren’t effective. Seeing how Jacob actually abandoned his master and escaped, their eyes were filled with disbelief. However, as compared to the leader of the imperial bodyguards, Leylin was clearly more important. They made a decision after a few moments of a daze.

A black snake-like figure chased after Jacob, while the other three assassins surrounded Leylin in a triangular formation.

“Heh heh... A noble young master with such thin skin and tender meat!” One of the assassins licked the dagger in his hand, as green light shot out from his eyes like a wolf.

“Act quickly, this is still his territory after all. Someone will come soon!” The explosion earlier on obviously couldn’t be hidden. The three assassins kept drawing closer, their eyes fixated on Leylin’s heart, throat and other vital points. They evidently weren’t planning to let him live for long.

“He’s a wizard, be careful of his tricks!” The moment the voice stopped, a few figures started to encircle Leylin as fast as the wind, and they didn’t even give him the chance to speak.

Three daggers that resembled viper fangs surrounded Leylin. The sharp breeze even sliced at Leylin’s skin.

“They’re well trained.” Leylin quickly made a gesture at the speed of lightning, and he suddenly spat out a single syllable.

BOOM! A deafening explosion sounded out, louder than the earlier bombs. It deafened the three assassins, and was followed by a ball of fiery white light bursting out from Leylin’s finger. It caused them to involuntarily close their eyes.

These were the rank 0 spells Rank 0 spells Flare and Sonic Snap! Given the situations, instantaneous spells like them were the most appropriate to use. Moreover, Leylin could also adjust and select the spell to his liking, basing it on the circumstances he would encounter. This was much better than those inflexible wizards.

Although they suffered a double blow which caused them to go blind and become giddy, the daggers of the three assassins still sluggishly headed for Leylin. Yet at this instant, Leylin suddenly made his move.

His hand stretched out as quick as lightning, and the dagger of the assassin in the middle came to a stop. An acupoint on his arm seemed to have been hit, and it fell limp and feeble like a dead snake.

‘No...Oh no!’ Before the assassin could even finish this thought, the dagger in his hand had changed ownership and was now in Leylin’s possession.

Thump! Thump! Two figures flew backwards. The assassin in the centre, however, was not as fortunate. He knelt on the floor with

his hands held behind his back, while the dagger that was previously in his hand was pressed against his neck.

The sensation of the sharp blade made every single strand of hair on his neck stand on end.

“Did you think that I was just a wizard?” Leylin laughed coldly.

Wizards were all relatively solitary. Leylin had moved out long ago by himself, thus practically no one knew about about his wizard rank apart from Ernest. Even his expertise in martial arts was concealed by Jacob under the Baron’s orders.

“I wanted to ask who sent you guys, but it seems like you won’t say...” Leylin’s deep voice sounded like the muttering of a demon to the assassin who was kneeling on the floor.

Moments later, the dagger in Leylin’s hand suddenly cut straight through the assassin’s throat. Great quantities of fresh blood started gushing out of his throat as he gasped greedily for air. The radiance in his eyes slowly dimmed, and he collapsed onto the ground.

Seeing how Leylin killed as if it meant nothing and how he did not even seem to have an uncomfortable reaction to it, the other two surviving assassins stole a glance at each other, both intending to flee.

They never knew that the target they were up against would be

this difficult to handle. Not only did he possess rather good magic abilities, he was also proficient in combat. His exquisite control over the battlefield and his merciless killing style were not things that a young nobleman who was inexperienced in life would be capable of.

Now, they practically suspected that some sort of devil resided in this young nobleman's body, or perhaps this was someone else impersonating him.

‘But we still have hope!’ Determination flashed in both of the assassins' eyes, and they suddenly started to make their escape.

Chapter 805 - Counterattack

“Trying to leave?” Leylin sneered as the dagger flew out of his hand. With a violent scream, it dove straight into the assassin’s back. This was the rank 0 spell, Launch Bolt. With Leylin’s own powers, the dagger he threw was out comparable to a crossbow bolt.

Miserable gasps sounded out briefly before the assassin fell to the floor. Provoked by the death of his companion, the other one ran even faster.

Leylin chased after him as well, not seeming to have noticed the dark figure that was constantly closer. These two assassins were bait, and the real surekill strike would come from the leader who was hiding in secret.

Smack! Smack! Leylin chased up to the fleeing assassin in a flash. The fellow had long been scared out of his wits, and was already down on the floor after being beaten up a few times. Leylin unhinged his jaw and broke all of his limbs.

At this moment, he showed joy on his face. This was the reaction that a powerful juvenile ought to have after obtaining the first victory in his life.

The young man stood in front of the assassin who had collapsed. Although he had tried his best to conceal it, he still radiated the aura of someone high and mighty, “Speak! Who sent you?”

“I... I’ll speak....” The assassin’s voice was gentle. He played the role of attracting Leylin’s attention very well, and coordinated with his leader’s attack.

His lips kept opening and closing, yet the sounds he made were exceptionally indistinct, which made Leylin irritable, “Speak clearly! I can’t hear you!”

Leylin was half-squatting beside the assassin, and almost all the crucial points of his back were completely exposed.

‘Now!’ The assassin who was lurking in the dark widened his eyes. An arrow with a blue tip pierced through the air, and came close to Leylin’s back in an instant.

“Huh?!” Leylin opened his eyes wide, and a trace of panic finally appeared on his face.

“Mage Armour!” A transparent protective force field appeared, and the number of rank 1 spells that Leylin had prepared fell by one.

Poof! The arrow collided with the invisible force field, producing a sharp whistle. Yet it eventually deviated from its original course, and brushed past Leylin’s face.

The tremendous force from the contact made Leylin take a few steps back in succession, and he fell to the floor.

“Awoo!” “Awoo!” Numerous green eyes emerged from the darkness. A few strong and healthy figures pounced forth, their canine teeth covered with saliva as they tried to bite Leylin’s neck.

“A rank 1 Monster Summoning spell?!” Leylin cried out in alarm, but the expression on his face was quickly replaced with unwavering determination. He swiftly recited a few phrases, and pointed towards the wild wolves. A gigantic white web materialized out of thin air, trapping the three wild wolves in it. The white web seemed extremely sticky, rendering the wolves immobile.

“Who exactly is it?” The young man got up, evidently flustered and exasperated, but his expression was even more so filled with a faint hint of dread. At this very moment, the air behind him distorted and a silhouette emerged. The emerald dagger was heading straight towards Leylin’s heart, about to stab in.

“Shadow Step?! A rank 7 assassin?!” The young man made a startled cry and a rope flew out from his embrace.

“Animate Rope!” Under the influence of the spell, the rope seemed to have a life of its own, and threw itself towards the silhouette, curling around it tightly like a python.

Thump! The silhouette had his hands and legs tied, and collapsed onto the ground. Yet he had turned into a puppet.

“A substitute!” The expression on Leylin’s face was now that of horror. Soon after, he saw a blade of icy light appearing out of thin

air, thrusting right into his throat.

Clear-cut! Quick! An a lethal attack in one strike! This was the style of a high-level assassin. Moreover, he had clearly found out about Leylin's wizard rank through certain means, and had been patiently waiting until he'd thought that Leylin had exhausted all his spells before taking action. This one move didn't leave Leylin any chance at all.

Within such a short distance, there wouldn't be enough time even if he used any magical items. After all, those magic scrolls couldn't take effect instantly.

From his opponent's graceful glance, Leylin saw a deathly stillness. It was as though he wasn't about to assassinate a human, but a pig or dog, or some other animal. His profound gaze, however, held a trace of agitation. It was obvious that getting rid of this magic genius would bring him a particular sense of accomplishment.

However, when the assassin saw the look in Leylin's eyes, his expression changed. At this moment, Leylin's face was not filled with any panic or fear of death whatsoever, but just a smile of a person who had gotten his way.

'I finally caught you!' were the words he could infer from Leylin's smile.

'What does that mean? Caught me?' The assassin felt dizzy, but then saw the glaring radiance of a spell shine in front of him.

A blue ray shot straight into the palm with which he was holding the dagger. A layer of ice immediately spread until his entire palm was completely covered, and it even extended along his arm towards his body.

Shortly after, there was an excruciating pain from his thigh, along with the ear-piercing sound of bones breaking.

‘He broke my legs!’ The assassin’s heart sunk. He immediately lost his center of gravity and collapsed onto the floor.

Leylin didn’t let him go. A fist as hard as steel landed heavily on his face, making him spit out a few teeth covered in blood, and a small ball which contained highly poisonous toxins.

‘That wasn’t easy! If a rank 7 assassin wishes to escape, I might not be able to catch him!’ Leylin said, sighing after he finished with the formalities.

Everything had gone almost flawlessly in the battle earlier. These few assassins could only act according to the script that Leylin had written, and on the stage he had put in place. They had ultimately ended up being completely wiped out.

“You... Why do you still have a spell left? You... Aren’t you a rank 5 wizard?”

The chief assassin sputtered a few undecipherable words, along

with a large amount of bloody foam.

“It seems that a spy has appeared in my family? Also... Who told you that I’m just a rank 5 wizard?” Leylin shot a glance at the assassin, and appeared extremely disdainful.

“Heh heh... So... So you already advanced to rank 6 a long time ago!” The chief assassin seemed to be convinced, “As expected, you’re worthy of being the legendary magic genius. But what a pity... In the face of our power, you will be unable to avoid your ultimate downfall...”

“Stop spouting so much rubbish!” With a stroke of Leylin’s blade, the assassin fainted.

This assassin leader had a very high status and a decent amount of strength. He definitely knew a lot, and this was why Leylin was bent on plotting to capture him alive.

“He even knew that I’ve already advanced to a rank 5 wizard. Although this information is from several years ago, I’m afraid that it’s necessary to purge the family once through...” Leylin looked over at the chief assassin, who had already fainted. The list of traitors would certainly have to be fished out from the assassin’s own mouth, but no matter; he could be said to be an expert when it came to interrogation and psychological probing.

Perhaps the assassin in his hands would feel better off dying right away.

“Young master! Young master!” At this moment, there was a commotion at the port in the distance. Jacob had finally brought the patrol team over.

“This is– Ah....” An anxious Jacob immediately exhaled deeply after scanning the place.

The assassins at the scene had all collapsed on the ground, and there was even an additional person. Jacob understood the strength of these assassins very well. Each one of them had strength close to at least a rank 5 elite in their profession, and the one lurking in the dark was stronger.

If he was in Leylin’s shoes, Jacob would not have been able to avoid such attacks no matter how he tried, and it was very likely that he would have died there and then. However, his young master had rounded all of them up in one clean sweep, and didn’t even sustain any injuries.

This knowledge immediately gained Leylin Jacob’s respect, and this was even more true for the rest of the patrol team members.

“What happened to the person who was chasing after you?” Leylin looked at Jacob. Seeing the new wounds on his body, Leylin had already made a guess.

“We killed him, but his last counterattack in the face of death also took away the lives of two of our team members...” Jacob appeared rather embarrassed, especially after seeing the two people that Leylin had taken captive.

“You can bring that guy with you, and interrogate him in detail! Leave the other one to me!” Leylin threw the more average assassin to the patrol team, and left with the chief assassin.

The other fellow was evidently cannon fodder, and wouldn't know much. Compared to him, Leylin was more interested in the chief assassin. A rank 7 Professional wouldn't be attracted to someone so easily.

Moreover, he was 80% sure that the chief assassin still controlled the hidden spy in Leylin's manor, and he was even the source of intel for the pirates that had come ashore. Leylin absolutely would not hand him over to the useless patrol team before digging out everything in his brain. If not, he suspected that he would hear news about this chap committing suicide the next day.

“Jacob, take him with you. Don't let him leave my line of sight!” Under Leylin's commands, Jacob lifted the unconscious chief assassin onto his shoulders and followed behind Leylin.

The patrol team members looked at each other in dismay, and could only bring the remaining survivor back with them. They clearly wanted to vent all of their fury on him. Of course, they were also in charge of things like cleaning the battlefield. They had to bury the corpses to prevent an epidemic.

After they were all done, the area had barely regained its tranquil state. Only the ditches in ground and numerous blood stains spoke of the danger during the earlier battle.

“Who would’ve thought that my younger cousin has gotten so strong. Seems like I was worried for nothing...” A black figure flashed, revealing Isabel’s sturdy black attire. As she gazed in the direction Leylin had left in, her eyes turned gentle for a moment.

The softness was quickly replaced by a frigid gaze.

Chapter 806 - Gathering

The cold floor and the endless pain all over his body forced Mahnke awake.

He seemed to be in a cold and damp cellar. Ice-cold droplets of water dripped down his skin, and Mahnke could not help but sneeze, his eyes quickly beginning to grow clear.

“Right, the ambush failed. I’m a captive now... A captive. What a joke...” He could feel a sharp pain in his thighs and arms. The lack of his teeth left a sense of emptiness in the cavity that was his mouth.

By the dim light, Mahnke could see the noble who had achieved victory over him. The man looked exceptionally calm with not the slightest hint of joy in his expression, which only made him feel more fearful.

“You’re awake?”

“You– you’re dead meat! Dead meat!” Mahnke shivered as he exclaimed in a strange voice. The sounds he produced were distorted by the air leaking out of his mouth.

“Oh, is that so? And you’re going to do that?” Leylin’s expression was full of ridicule, “Or perhaps it’s him?”

The clothing on Mahnke’s arms slowly ripped apart, revealing a

church emblem branded into his skin. This was a strange rune made up of a head and fresh blood.

Leylin's impression of the God of Murder, Cyric, was that of someone powerful who liked provoking deaths and conspiracies. He found joy in causing civil wars in regions, and was one of those gods who liked to stir up shit. Even so, a real god's church would pose tremendous trouble for Leylin as he was right now.

“Stop bullshitting. You're just a follower of the God of Murder, and the mighty god would not shift his attention to a mere mortal, not to mention a piece of trash who is also a failure.” There were always followers of gods dying on the continent, and unless they were saints or high-ranked priests, the gods would not place much focus on them. Regular followers and the like were obviously neglected.

Unless Leylin used techniques to profane the soul of a believer, that god would not be angered into giving him divine punishment.

This deep understanding caused Mahnke to freeze, with a lifeless expression on his face.

“Tell me! How many mad dogs are there like you under Tim, that useless son of Marquis Louis?” Seeing that he had successfully shattered his defences, Leylin tossed out a huge bomb.

“You knew?” Mahnke exclaimed in surprised, which confirmed Leylin's suspicions.

‘So the information that Tapris had was real. Marquis Louis has

been the one behind all of this!’

“Since you know, you should understand that you can’t win...” Mahnke cackled, “Even if your talent as a wizard is startling, you’re nothing in the eyes of the real royalty even if you’re a rank 6 wizard...” It was obvious that his loss at Leylin’s hands was still fresh in his mind.

All that talk about him being rank 6? Leylin happily watched Mahnke guess wrong, and did not have any plans to correct him. After all, the fact that he was hiding his wizard rank and wasn’t restricted as much by the Weave was more believable than him being able to use rank 0 spells without limit, and he was less likely to be exposed because of it.

“Alright, I don’t have much time to chat with you. Now I need to know how many men there are under Tim. Where they are, when the pirates plan to come ashore, as well as the plans of the continent... Whatever it is, you must tell me all you know.” Leylin’s expression turned cold, his eyes flickering.

“Keke... I’ll say nothing. Aren’t you just going to torture me? Bring it on!” Mahnke, however, began to sound like a scoundrel.

Pirates and assassins naturally went through some training, and possessed great endurance against torture.

“Seems like you’re very confident in your endurance?” Leylin glanced at Mahnke, his eyes holding within them a sense of... pity?

“You’ll soon know how much happiness there is in death. All that you’ve experienced before is nothing...” Leylin cracked his knuckles loudly. There were few in the World of Gods with as much experience as him in torturing the body and soul.

His astonishing surgical skills and knowledge of potions allowed him to claim someone’s life with ease, and on top of that, he also had the spells that could affect their minds. Leylin’s eyes flickered with an evil glint. Soon enough, the other party would find how blissful it was to be able to choose death.

Mahnke gave in very quickly. Three hours later, he was weeping and sniffing as he revealed everything to Leylin, only begging for death. Leylin hadn’t used even a hundredth of his abilities.

Once he had gained all the information that Mahnke knew and confirmed the truth of his words, Leylin did not kill him or torture the poor child any longer. Instead, he threw him in jail. Such a high-ranked guinea pig with a profession was very difficult to obtain.

After gaining the intel, Leylin first personally purged the manor. With his experience and the detection abilities of the A.I. Chip, the hidden spies grew completely obvious. Soon enough, numerous little rats were seized, including a kitchen lady, two stable lads, and a few servants.

At crucial moments, Leylin never cared about not involving others when it came to crimes. He took control over their families, and such ruthless methods caused all those serving in the manor to tremble in fear. Even Claire and Clara grew afraid of him. Of

course, with what had happened as a pretext, his absolute domination of them extended further.

‘How many people can I gather?’ Leylin asked Jacob from behind the baron’s desk. His arms were crossed.

“Reporting to young master,” Jacob was wearing leather armour, and was cloaked in a powerful aura. His respectful attitude pleased Leylin greatly. “We’ll do our best at the port. We can transfer fifty men from the guard, and with the guards of the manor, there will be eighty men!”

“Eighty men?” Leylin muttered to himself. It was true that there were very few people that he could use, and at the very most those that he could were farmers with a few days of training, comparable just to militia.

The real elites were obviously by Baron Jonas’ side.

‘Things should be easier on their side with my warning.’ Leylin had obviously sent Baron Jacob the information he’d obtained, and it was sure to be useful for him. At the very least, they weren’t going in completely blind and knew who the enemy was.

“Gather them and prepare to annihilate the pirates with me!” The group of pirates who could come ashore at any moment was the most urgent threat to Leylin, and he wasn’t going to watch them wreak havoc on his territory. Taking the initiative to make the first move thus became the most necessary choice.

“Understood! We shall become the sharpest blades in young master’s hands!” Jacob guaranteed.

“I look forward to it!” They were Leylin’s only hope. Though these militia could do little against those with professions, they would still be of some use to regular pirates.

With his current strength, it was impossible for him to eliminate so many pirates. It was important to have help from subordinates.

“Mm... This should be enough power to deal with the regular pirates, but based on the information from Mahnke there’s a rank 10 leader amongst them, and we don’t have enough high-ranked powers...” Leylin stroked his chin, muttering to himself irresolutely.

‘If we talk about high-ranked power, Cousin Isabel should be alright, but it’s better that she protect Madam Sarah.’ At the thought of her, Leylin immediately asked, “What’s that cousin of mine, Isabel, been up to?”

After hearing this question, Jacob looked hesitant.

“Tell me!” Leylin’s expression went cold.

“Does young master still remember the spies that were captured?” Jacob gritted his teeth.

“Didn’t I tell you to take care of them?” Leylin’s brows furrowed.

“Out of all of the captives, she picked two servants and took them away and there hasn’t been word on her location. Ever since she entered her room, it’s like she has completely disappeared from the world. Based on what the patrolling guards said, miserable cries have been heard from her room...”

Jacob’s expression was filled with unspeakable horror. After all, people of this world easily related these happenings to ‘devils’, ‘demonic rituals’ and the like. Isabel’s actions were of a similar vein.

“Alright...” Leylin rubbed his forehead, feeling a headache coming on, “Anything else?”

“The miss seems to have some interest in the family members of the spies, but I persuaded her...” Jacob said.

‘I almost forgot that’s a problem. Things would get troublesome if the people from the church were to find out...’ Leylin sighed, “I’ll take care of Isabel’s matter personally. Don’t tell anyone about this. Demote the families of these criminals to slaves and don’t lock them up in the manor for some more time. Get them to the pier and put them in hard labour, or just sell them...”

It was important to set the norms at this point, whether they be positive or negative. Whatever it was, the people had to see the serious consequences of betrayal if he wanted to intimidate them effectively.

“Alright!” Jacob did not have any objections and carried out his orders, leaving Leylin alone.

Leylin watched the tranquil night sky outside, and suddenly sighed.

Chapter 807 - Secret Laboratory

Leylin wandered through the door and over to Isabel's room. Isabel had grown very reclusive since their meeting, and had even chased out the original maids.

Knock! Knock! Leylin knocked the door politely.

"Who is it? Didn't I say I was not to be disturbed?" Isabel's voice seemed rather angry.

"It's me," Leylin said calmly. The door pulled open to reveal Isabel's face. However, there was an unnatural flush on her cheeks, as if she had been going through some rigorous exercise, or perhaps a ceremony.

"What's the matter? I'm preparing to get some rest!" After seeing Leylin, Isabel appeared flustered for an instant.

"Are you not going to invite me in?" Leylin smiled.

"It's not gentlemanly to enter a lady's chamber at this time of night, you know! Or perhaps you've become a degenerate, my dear cousin?" Isabel's eyes glinted and she rested languidly against the door, speaking coquettishly.

Leylin secretly had the urge to laugh in reaction to her pretentious pose. When it came to experience, the amount he had under his belt far exceeded hers.

“Have I turned into a degenerate? Would you like to find out?” Leylin closed in with a naughty smile on his face and ruthlessly sniffed her fair neck, inhaling the scent of a girl’s body mixed with a particular smell.

“What are you doing?” The girl dodged him as she turned red, and Leylin took the chance to enter the room.

There wasn’t much of a change in the arrangements here, but there seemed to be a vague bloody scent permeating the air. Though she had cleaned up and made an attempt to conceal it, Leylin’s brows still furrowed.

“Is there anything you would like to tell me about?” Leylin sat on the sofa and tried to sound as genuine as he could, “You’re my cousin after all, and I don’t want you to bear this burden all alone.”

“It’s nothing... That’s all over...” Isabel froze, and then spoke as if she did not care.

Leylin sighed in answer to her attempt to appear strong. Of course, he knew that there was no benefit to revealing the truth. Though there were traces of negative energy polluting the room, her own actions were as pure as those of a little white rabbit when compared to the experiments he conducted.

Leylin changed his mind. He had originally believed that letting her stay behind would be a good decision, but by the looks of it, leaving her in the manor would only attract more attention and

trouble. “Fine! I’m here to ask for help!”

“What is it about?” Isabel’s eyes flashed with a chilly glint.

“Well...” Leylin scratched his head and then revealed the news about Marquis Louis and Viscount Tim, and also the imminent attack of the pirates.

“In that case... They were responsible for the annihilation of my family?” Isabel’s hand twitched, and a portion of a black ironwood chair was broken off. Wood shavings scattered from between her fingers.

‘Such physical strength?’ Leylin’s pupils shrank, ‘She exceeds a rank 5 professional, and is close to rank 10... Those devils and demons are really quite generous, though the price is the soul of the sacrificer...’

Leylin had heard about the continuous offers of blood required to gain demonic energy. Followers of demons were rounded up and annihilated on the continent. If news of the Faulen Family protecting her went out, there would be troubles even more pressing than Marquis Louis.

“But I don’t know for sure yet. That’s only a possibility...” Leylin stroked his chin and did not lie about this.

“Fine, I’ll verify it for myself. Those pirates even dare trespass and offend our Faulen Family’s territory! We must have them pay

the price in blood and have their souls repent in hell!” Isabel’s pretty eyes narrowed, filling with a murderous thirst.

“Thank you so much, cousin!” Leylin silently cursed to himself inside, but in the meanwhile the smile on his face was dazzling.

“Don’t worry, we’re cousins after all. I’ll take care of you!” Isabel promised, looking steadfast and resolute.

After thanking her again, Leylin withdrew, though the smile on his face had dissipated. His eyes flickered, obviously deep in thought. ‘The open sea is vast and filled with all sorts of trash and scum from the continent. Sailors from this era can’t be considered good, and faithless people and followers are mixed in with them. There shouldn’t have any trouble if she hides amongst them...’

As the follower of a demon, Isabel obviously could not stay in the family; It would cause him an endless amount of trouble. After all, the power of the churches were at its peak in the prime material plane, and once it was discovered that the Faulen Family housed a demon follower the consequences would be extremely dire.

Thus, the vast open seas would be the best place for her to hide.

‘On top of that, the demon might have given her a lot of strength, but there’s definitely a price to pay. That might even be her soul...’ Leylin looked grim, ‘A few useless sailors disappearing from the open sea shouldn’t count for much. That can temporarily satisfy the demon and gain her more time...’

In this time, Leylin would obviously become stronger. As long as he was powerful enough, whether it was Marquis Louis closing in on them or the demon contract that his cousin had, he was confident he could eliminate all of those problems, problems that a rank 6 wizard could not solve.

‘Plans constantly change... And right now, I urgently need strength. It might be alright to take a risk...’ Leylin secretly made up his mind.

This attack would evidently expose part of his power. From the very beginning, Viscount Tim had already sent out an assassination squad with a rank 7 leader, which meant that the pirates had to be even stronger. Help from his cousin and the subordinates wouldn’t be enough, he needed to increase his chances.

After returning to his room, Leylin headed straight for his laboratory. By his command, even Claire and Clara could not enter, and there were also a few warning spell patterns set up that were hard at work.

On the glossy laboratory table were many test tubes and glass tools neatly stacked together. There was also various alchemical equipment that was enough for poorer wizard students to go green with envy.

It was a pity that, in Leylin’s eyes, it was all a mere cover.

Crack! Crack! After Leylin pulled at a handle under the

laboratory table, the sounds of gears grinding against each other rang out. Along with the gentle sound, the entire table moved to the left, revealing a pathway that led downwards.

‘While wizards have great trust in magic, there are too many items and techniques in the world which can detect spell undulations. On the contrary, simple mechanisms like these can conceal even more secrets...’ Leylin carried an oil lamp as he went down the staircase. After going about ten metres in, he arrived in front of a large rock.

The large granite gave the feeling that it was indestructible as it stood tall inside, blocking the road completely as if this was a dead end.

“Arcane Mark, activate!” A spell rune flashed in Leylin’s hands, and amongst the light the surface of the granite began to soften as it revealed a shining channel. Leylin did not hesitate at all as he walked in, hanging his oil lamp on the wall.

What appeared behind the large rock was a small-scale laboratory. He had used mechanisms to prevent magic probes here, and created a trap at the bottom. That was enough to show how highly Leylin valued this laboratory.

As this was deep underground, the laboratory had an area of only several square meters. A large, ancient wooden table had already taken up most of the area, and there was little space left for one to stand. The ceiling was also very low and the entire room felt very stifling.

The smell of tar grew obvious on the floor and corners, indicating an even more terrifying self-combustion mechanism. If Leylin suspected anything, just a small spark would be enough to char this whole place and hide everything here.

The reason for this was because Leylin's experiments were far too shocking. If ever discovered, they would be deemed heresy!

"It seems like it's almost complete..." Leylin observed the giant solution in the petri dish. Large amounts of boiling, fresh red liquid gave people an ominous feeling that this was blood.

"And then... this!" At the corner of the table was a wooden statue. It had a pair of demonic wings, multiple compound eyes and six fingers that formed a demon, emitting an evil aura.

This was a statue that Leylin had constructed of Beelzebub based on his memories. The possession of such a statue would have one burnt to death if they were caught by the churches, and even a king wouldn't be spared this treatment.

Of course, these taboos meant nothing to Leylin. His courage was enough to stupefy many gods.

"Looks like Beelzebub has really sunk into a deep sleep. He doesn't react at all to prayers or sacrifices..." Leylin's hands caressed the devil's statue with an unspeakable expression in his eyes.

Come to think of it, he was the main culprit behind this. If he had not stolen so much of Beelzebub's laws and even destroyed most of his truesoul, the Sovereign King of Gluttony would not be so seriously injured that he had to sleep it off.

Chapter 808 - Devilblood Dagger

“Of course, according to this world, my main body deprived Beelzebub of most of his divinity and divine force. This greatly damaged his divine soul and he hence fell into a deep sleep, now he can’t even answer the prayers of his worshippers...”

Devils were always extremely sensitive towards sacrifices and prayers from the prime material plane. Through his many probes, Leylin was absolutely sure that this great master devil had already fallen deep asleep, completely unresponsive to the outside world’s stimulation.

This sent Beelzebub’s followers in the prime material plane into chaos. Had Beelzebub not hidden his main body well, Leylin might even have received news of his death.

“Regardless of whether one is a god or a devil, once you lose the ability to respond to prayers and the power to grant wishes, you will not be far from death...” Leylin sighed. There were cases where gods had died not to external factors, but to decreasing power of worship. This was truly pathetic.

‘Gods rely on believers for their existence. Despite having great powers and abilities, they are restrained by the very same power of faith. Except for someone who’s merged with the world origin force and become an existence that has comprehended an extraordinary divine force...’ He let out a deep breath, ‘Such an existence would be equal to a rank 8 Magus who’s found their own path. There are few such beings even in the World of Gods.’

He gathered his thoughts and turned his attention back to the statue, “Since Beelzebub is in a deep sleep, then I don’t have to be so cautious of using his name anymore...”

Truth be told, with his possession of a majority of Beelzebub’s memories, Leylin was like a real devil king. He could even steal Beelzebub’s believers and usurp his position. However, doing so required great power, and Leylin was only a rank 6 Magus.

Needless to say, he also had to acquire the power to grant his believers’ wishes. To usurp a god’s position he first had to acquire divinity.

“The laws of gluttony and devouring are great, but they’re already considered fiendish in the World of Gods. If I use such power here...” Leylin shook his head regretfully. If he wished to survive in the prime material plane, he could not rely entirely on divinity as his foundation. He hadn’t carried these abilities over his reincarnation, but even if he had they would’ve been useless, wiped out by the world origin.

“It’s best to take it step by step. Thankfully it takes a while for faith to erode. The worshipers of the Sovereign King of Gluttony will not vanish so quickly...”

“Moreover, even if they do disappear, it’s just one less convenient path and reduced income for me. It’s not really not worth the risk, so it’s better for me to stick to the original plan and be steady...” Leylin’s eyes brightened, and he suddenly tightened his grip.

Crack! Crack! Turing the statue of the Sovereign King of Gluttony into ashes, dropping it to the floor bit by bit.

“I must admit though, the devil got many useful things.” Leylin stuck his hand into the petri dish, and soon fished out a knife covered in blood. The pocket-sized knife had a beautiful curve to it, and it looked like a very fine work of art.

A fierce demon skull tipped its handle, numerous eyes on it giving off a savage glare. Two devilish wings made up the hand guard, and complicated patterns that looked like veins covered the entire handle. Its demonic looks were only enhanced by the faint crimson glow and the blood dripping from its tip.

“So the Devilblood Dagger’s done!” Leylin’s eyes flashed with joy, and the A.I. Chip followed up with data on the Devilblood Dagger.

[Devilblood Dagger. Weight: 9182g, Length: 9in, Ingredients: Cockatrice bones, fresh blood, weeping spirits. Effects: Possesses the power of a devil, able to absorb a target’s flesh and blood to increase one’s own power. Description: An extremely vicious weapon that even gods fear, the Devilblood Dagger represents ominous death. Creator: Leylin Faulen.]

“It’s rather good!” Leylin fiddled with the dagger, causing it to glow with a dark light. There were many, many items like this in Beelzebub’s memory; he’d used their easy power to lure people from the prime material plane to his side.

This Devilblood Dagger was a very good weapon from Beelzebub's memories. If a believer wanted to be bestowed this dagger, they would have to sacrifice a rank 15 or greater priest from a hostile god, or even slaughter a small city to even think of getting it.

'The devils are the best way to increase my power in a short amount of time currently. They treat both the young and the old honestly, but the price one has to pay in the end is usually even more frightening...' Leylin heaved a sigh.

His cousin Isabel had clearly been seduced by a demon after giving into despair. She had succumbed to it in the end, and had now gotten herself in tons of trouble.

Unlike her, Leylin didn't become a collector for demonic sacrifices. He'd done something much more vicious, nearing becoming a devil king. All the flesh and blood devoured by the Devilblood Dagger would go to feeding his own power!

'Even if I've crafted it, I still need to perform some experiments on this dagger, especially the problem with contamination.' Leylin furrowed his brows, the main reason why he had taken so long to make the dagger was because he was working on changing its properties. He wanted to avoid some of the side effects of its use.

After all, Beelzebub was no kind soul. His treasures were used to lure followers into depravity, and the Devilblood Dagger was no exception. It slowly corrupted one's mind and soul with use,

turning them into a devil.

Being one himself, Beelzebub had no problems with using the dagger, but Leylin was different. He needed to remain human, as he would come into contact with churches and high-ranked priests in the future; turning half-devil would impose great restrictions on what he could do.

‘Although The A.I. Chip already solved the corruption problem, there’s still the issue of its radiance. It screams depravity and evil, I’m not sure I could get away with it...’ Leylin walked straight into the manor while he was still thinking.

“Young master!” A trained guard saluted. The man wore leather armour, and the longsword in his hand sparkled— Obviously the manor’s security system had greatly been upgraded after the attack on Leylin.

It was obvious at a glance that this fellow was merely a trained farmer, just a little stronger than a regular human. “Howard, right? Follow me!” Leylin said.

“Roger that!” Howard could not disobey the young master. He followed right after Leylin to the dungeon. Once the rest were cleared out, only Leylin and Howard were left there. Of course, there were also the two unfortunate assassins who were lying on the ground.

“Can I trust you, Howard?” Leylin’s voice was soft, but it had a special tone in it.

Such a special tone gave Howard an ominous premonition, but loyalty occupied his mind and soon he replied with a straight back, “I would risk my life for you, young master!”

“Great! Now, look into my eyes!” Leylin ordered Howard to raise his head, it felt as if there was a mysterious spiral in those pupils of his.

“Rank 1 spell— Charm Person!” Under Leylin’s spell, Howard’s pupils soon lost their focus, turning him into a zombie.

“This rank 1 spell...” Leylin mumbled, “It can only charm the mind... It’ll work perfectly on regular people, but it’ll be weak against professionals. It would probably on render Jacob a little dizzy for a few seconds...”

“Take this, chop off one of his fingers!” Leylin ordered, passing the dagger to Howard.

“Ugh.... Ughh!” The strange situation gave Mahnke the feeling that something catastrophic was about to happen. However, his limbs had all been broken earlier, and his body was thoroughly tied up. He could only struggle in vain and had no other method to resist.

Howard carried out Leylin’s order with the Devilblood Dagger in hand, a soulless expression on his face. His other hand pinned Mahnke’s down to the floor, and he chopped off a finger without hesitation.

Schlick! The dull sound of blade slamming against flesh could be heard, together with Mahnke's sorrowful sounds. A bloody pinky was chopped off, and it twitched on the floor like a worm.

Keke...Ughhhh... At the same time, the dagger emitted a radiant light, and the demonic skull at the hilt let out a sinister laugh. The numerous eyes shot out a demonic lustre.

Layer upon layer of veins began to squirm on the handle, swallowing the blood on its surface. Many tiny blood-coloured strings penetrated into Howard's body, and the pinky on the floor gradually shrunk before their eyes. It soon turned into a dried out piece of charcoal. Looking like firewood.

"How do you feel now?" Leylin asked.

"The dagger is very hot, and the heat is spreading to me!"

"A. I. Chip, examine his stats!" Leylin's eyes began to glow.

Chapter 809 - Devour Breakthrough

[Beep! Mission established, beginning scan!]

The A.I. Chip carried out Leylin's commands loyally.

Soon enough, the latest results were transmitted.

[Compared to previous data, target's vitality has risen by 0.01, strength by 0.02, spiritual force by 0.005. No obvious adverse reaction.]

"The flesh of high-ranked professionals does indeed provide a great boost for regular humans..." Leylin nodded. He understood that these numbers were exaggerated, and if it were himself the amplification to his stats wouldn't reach even 0.00001. This was the difference created by the varying base stats.

"Ah... you devil! You're a devil worshipper!" At this moment, Mahnke, who was still on the ground, shrieked. Though Cyric the God of Murder had always possessed a bad reputation, he was still a good samaritan when compared to demons and devils.

Knowing that the wizard keeping him captive was a follower of a devil, Mahnke completely lost all hope. As a member of the dark realm, he naturally knew that the followers of devils liked to

sacrifice flesh, blood, as well as the souls of the followers of gods in order to obtain rewards from the devils.

“Kill me! Kill me quickly! Don’t profane my soul, else the gods won’t let you off!” Mahnke yelled hysterically, but paired with his dry throat his voice was like a broken bellow and it couldn’t travel out of the jail.

“Shut up!” Leylin’s brows furrowed as he kicked outwards, causing Mahnke to faint.

“Now, here’s the most important part. Detect Alignment!” A bundle of white light in Leylin’s hands covered Howard.

Soon enough, glee appeared on his face, ‘The alignment is still neutral! It seems like as long as it doesn’t profane the soul all the terrible consequences will be taken up by Beelzebub. The ability to grow in strength by devouring flesh and blood is rather valuable...’

Of course, Leylin knew very well that the part with the greatest energy was the soul. The energy he would acquire from a person’s flesh and blood alone wouldn’t even be half the total that the body had.

However, profaning the soul was labelled chaotic and evil. Leylin could only resign himself to part with that desire of his. Leylin nodded and retrieved the Devilblood Dagger, giving Howard an instruction, “Alright, you may go! After you leave this jail, you will forget everything you’ve just done!”

“Understood!” Howard staggered out, leaving Leylin alone in the jail, deep in thought.

‘It takes a lot of energy to turn the power of flesh and blood into spiritual force. On top of that, I’ll need to ensure that I wipe out the memories of the soul in its final moments...’ Numerous possibilities streaked through Leylin’s mind, allowing him to make more plans regarding the Devilblood Dagger.

He’d originally planned on travelling outside to use the Devilblood Dagger, hunting to quickly increase his strength. But due to the need to keep a low profile, he had no choice but to exercise patience.

But now? The situation was now very different. Leylin had been bullied in his home territory, and he urgently needed great power. Otherwise, the Faulen Family could very well be wiped out just like Isabel’s!

Of course, there were slight differences in their circumstances. Isabel needed to pray for strength from devils and demons, while Leylin only needed to rely on himself.

“After a little modification, I will be done here! Mister Mahnke... It’s now your time to shine...” Blood red radiance flickered on the surface of the Devilblood Dagger, reflecting Leylin’s expressionless face. He glanced at Mahnke on the floor the way he would at a dead man, or perhaps a swine before slaughter.

The devouring power from the dagger was intoxicating, but with

his own grasp of the law of devouring Leylin could control it skillfully. An unceasing stream of heat gathered in the dagger in his right hand, extending to his entire body.

A sense of comfort stimulated a great breakthrough in his spiritual force, sending it spurring towards a deeper level of the Weave. At this moment, the A.I. Chip's robotic voice sounded by Leylin's ear.

[Beep! Detected change in stats to host body. Vitality increased by 0.2, spiritual force increased by 0.05.]

Countless prompts refreshed, allowing Leylin to see his stats increase. His spiritual force, which had long since reached the peak of rank 6, finally broke through with this burst of strength.

Crack! A slight sound could be felt directly from his soul, and Leylin felt his spiritual force making contact with an even more terrifying level of the Weave.

He understood what had happened, "The third level of the Weave! I've contacted the third level of the Weave and officially become a rank 7 wizard!"

At this moment, the A.I. Chip's voice was transmitted.

[Beep! Host's spiritual force has contacted level 3 of the

Weave. Advanced to rank 7 wizard (spiritual force +0.5)]

[Host has advanced to rank 7 as a wizard. New additions:
Rank 3 spell slot (1), rank 2 spell slot (1), rank 1 spell slot (1)!]
[Detected drastic changes to host's stats. Recalculating...]

The A.I. Chip refreshed the screen with more information. In just a moment, Leylin's stats were renewed.

[Leylin Farlier. Age: 15. Race: Human, Rank 7 Wizard.
Strength: 2.5. Agility: 2. Vitality: 3.7. Spiritual force: 7. Status:
Healthy. Innate talent: Sturdy, Erudite. Spell slots possessed:
Rank 3 spell slot (1), rank 2 spell slot (3), rank 1 spell slot (4),
rank 0 spell slot (???)]

‘Forget the spiritual force, I’d long since reached its limit. But the increase to my other stats... It’s practically the sum of my fifteen years of growth...’ Leylin’s eyes flickered, ‘Could it be that now that I’ve reached fifteen and become an adult, my body’s stats have all reached the average standard, and more importantly, my growth is now complete? This way, I’ll be able to advance and accept more strength?’

Leylin looked at the spell slots, “As expected. I got a rank 3 spell slot after advancing to rank 7, it looks like this Goddess of the

Weave is impartial to all wizards...”

The increase in spell slot numbers followed unfathomable rules. Some enchanted tools could increase the number of spell slots, and it was rumoured that those the goddess favoured could have more spell slots after advancing. However, there were two ironclad rules: One, one could have no more than 9 slots for a rank. Two, Only after reaching a certain level could wizards gain spell slots of certain ranks.

In other words, Leylin was now a rank 7 wizard, and he could at most only have rank 3 spell slots. It was impossible for him to have rank 4 spell slots, and even if he were to find a bunch of enchanted rings that could increase the number of spell slots, there would still be a limit of 9. It was impossible to have more than that, even for rank 0.

Furthermore, this iron rule was for all wizards. Even legendary wizards and those related to gods were treated the same way, with no change. Seeing the limitations that the gods put on wizards, Leylin’s lips curved.

‘Seems like the Magi left a very deep impression on the gods during the ancient war, to the point that they felt fear. They didn’t hesitate to shackle the spell-casting professions. Is that to prevent a repeat occurrence of the Magi?’

‘If there comes a day that the shackles of the Weave are destroyed, what sort of interesting things are going to happen?’ Leylin chuckled, beginning to feel a little anticipation.

‘And then there’s the power from devouring flesh and blood...’ Leylin stood up, staring at the skeleton on the floor. He put the Devilblood Dagger away, and his brows began to furrow.

He felt that his body was swelling like an obese person who had eaten far too much, to the point that even his soul could not take it.

‘It seems like this ability can’t be used too often, especially before the body has digested all the energy. If that happens, the berserk life energy could become the most fatal toxin!’ Leylin shook his head, knowing that this Devilblood Dagger should not be used lightly.

‘In addition, no one can know of this, or else I’ll be confirmed to be a devil worshipper. It’ll be game over for me then...’ At this thought, Leylin immediately began to clear up the skeletal remains on the ground.

Things that made it evident that they had been used for evil rites and the like and could not be left lying around. They were best removed by burning.

As for the souls the Devilblood Dagger absorbed, Leylin had modified its effects on them. They went through unimaginable suffering before their death that served to completely fragment their memories, leaving no traces at all.

‘With the Devilblood Dagger, all my accumulations can allow me

to pass through the many ranks of wizards quickly...' Leylin's eyes flashed with a glint of light, 'This means it's necessary to find something to hide all this...'

This advancement was unnatural, and if just one person found something was off, Leylin knew that he would probably need to move away alone and hide himself in the name of training in seclusion.

After gaining enough strength, he would immediately travel in order to hide his unusual growth. And the many battles with Viscount Tim's pirates would clearly be a great source for such a thing. Viscount Tim, and even Marquis Louis, would very soon find out that in a bid to obtain more profits, they had chosen a very terrifying enemy!

The devil was thirsting for his enemy's blood to grow, and would soon take over the World of Gods.

Chapter 810 - Mobilisation

With the Faulen Family's prestige and reputation in the island, it wasn't difficult to cobble up a patrol. However, on the field where grain was drying, Leylin frowned at the sight of his subordinates.

"Getting fifty from the port and another thirty from the manor... Is this our limit?" A sparse crowd stood at the field, awaiting Leylin's inspection. While they had done all they could to rub their leather armour and weapons till they were sparkling clean and tried their best to stick their chests out, Leylin still felt they looked like nothing but a bunch of rowdy people.

'It's alright if you get them to patrol and maintain order, but once you bring them to a bloody battlefield...' Leylin shook his head inwardly, though the expression on his face showed excitement.

"Residents of the Faulen Island! There are a group of horrible, evil pirates about to reach the coast. They will slaughter your parents, steal your copper and bread, and humiliate your wives and daughters. Those low-lives are capable of anything!" Leylin did his best to sound agitated to stir up the masses.

Was there a need to announce what the pirates would do to them? The troops began to get restless and immediately knew that Leylin spoke the truth. It might even be an understatement.

"Well then... tell me! Are you willing to let this happen?" Leylin's sharp voice resounded in the field.

“No!” “No!” Though many of them were mercenaries who only worked when money was involved, most of them were farmers who had enlisted. Their families were here, and even the mercenaries had settled down here. At the very least, when it came to protecting one’s family and wealth, these people were rather enthusiastic and hot-blooded.

Hence after being provoked, all of them were flush with anger as they roared with all the strength they had.

“Good! As the master of this territory, I call on you to pick up your weapons and prepare to fight bravely to protect your home!” Leylin spoke so loudly that his voice could be heard from every corner of the field.

In such a feverish atmosphere, there could be one or two who remained timid or rational, but they would soon be drowned out by the crowd, dragged along with the flow.

“Our Faulen Family will not treat any of you unfairly!” Leylin clapped his hands, and two bodyguards went up on stage with numerous boxes.

The large copper locks were opened, revealing brand new armour within. There was even some chainmail that was made of metal rings. Not only did this metal armour provide a greater defence than leather armour, it was more flexible to boot. It was practical, but there were high requirements on its forging so these items had no market.

Beside the armour were even greater quantities of shining weapons. Vorpall swords, curved blades, hammers, lances... there was anything one could need.

On top of that, these weapons were in good shape and they had a layer of oil on the surface. There were no signs of rust or corrosion, and they radiated a lustre from their sharp edges.

“All those who take part in this operation can choose a weapon of their own! Vice captains and those ranked above can all choose a set of armour!” Leylin’s scanned the crowd. Evidently, these excellent weapons were attractive to the point that people would risk their lives for them. Leylin found a few fellows whose eyes were shining.

‘Of course...’ For this reason, he raised his voice intentionally, “If you can contribute in this battle, there is no reason why we can’t reward you with these weapons and armour!”

With this promise, there was a huge uproar in the crowd below. In this age, metallic weapons and armour had a very high value and could even be said to be treasures passed down generations of knights. Many of them didn’t dare to believe Leylin’s promise.

“There’s no need to doubt me, I vow in the name of the Faulen Family!” Leylin looked especially solemn, making this guarantee with his name as a noble. Though this meant nothing to him, with the values of the World of Gods the promise of a noble still held quite some value.

Hence, many soldiers could not help but begin to cheer.

Leylin cleared his throat and urged for the last time, “In addition... If there are injuries or even deaths in battle, I will offer compensation. If you die in battle, your rewards will be given to your family!”

“Faulen!” “Faulen!” The soldiers below began to cheer in their excitement. Injuries and death were the worst fates for veterans in a feudal age. Leylin was even willing to compensate them for it, which was something even churches didn’t do!

‘This should be able to somewhat boost their morale, right? Though... it’s just this once!’ Leylin stared at the soldiers whose moral was at the peak while laughing bitterly inside.

With his actions, he would suffer losses even if they won the battle. It was the entire reason why lords seldom did things like this. Those weapons and armour alone were the accumulations of the Faulen Family over the year, and a large part of the family’s wealth.

However, this was a special circumstance, and Leylin had no choice but to do this. After all, if the Faulen Family were to cease existing, these items would be useless.

The soldiers outside began preparations for battle, while a small meeting was being held in the manor.

“We’ll leave the manor to you, Uncle Leon,” Leylin spoke to the housekeeper on his right, “I’ve already sent down the order that you’ll be in charge of everything in the manor.”

“I will definitely protect everything for you!” Leon’s placed his right hand on his chest as he promised.

Leylin nodded, feeling assured. His mother, Claire, and Clara had all been sent to the church of knowledge at the port in secret.

With how shrewd Bishop Tapris was, it would probably be the best place for them on the island if he and his father met danger.

Based on what Mahnke said, the assassins he had captured were the only ones that the enemy had sent, but Leylin considered the fact that Viscount Tim might be driven to desperation.

After Leon left, only Isabel, Jacob and a few leaders with professions remained. They were the strongest, and Leylin had nothing to hide from them.

“Based on the information I’ve received, there are over a hundred people amongst the pirates, and the leader is a rank 10 Professional!” At this point, Leylin looked grim, and everyone except Isabel gasped.

“A hundred men, and a rank 10 Professional? This kind of strength isn’t second to the power of a famous pirate crew! Why

would they come here?” Jacob gasped.

In reality, the truly strong would not do something as beneath themselves and dangerous as become pirates. With their strength and reputation, they could become public security officers in any large city, and could even become nobles.

It was illogical for someone like them to attack the Faulen Family.

Leylin nodded as he sneered. “Hehe... This is a famous pirate group. Have you heard of the Black Tiger?”

“Black Tiger Pirates?” The shock in Jacob’s eyes grew even more profound, “They... they operate in the seas of the Baltic archipelago, and they shouldn’t have any grudges against our Faulen Family...”

“Sometimes, there needn’t be grudges to start a fight for benefits. What aren’t those greedy pigs capable of?” Isabel stood out, unsheathing the black longsword in her hands.

Swish! A flash of black light passed, splintering the table in front of them and splitting it apart.

“Or... are you scared?” There was a murderous glint in Isabel’s eyes, as if she would kill if anyone dared say no.

“Ah, I forgot to tell all of you. My cousin is a rank 9 and will act

with us!” Leylin cleared his throat.

‘This strength... It’s clearly above rank 5. I just don’t know if she’s a warrior or knight-errant...’ Though Isabel looked like a little girl, these team leaders here did not dare belittle her. A rank 9 was enough to crush them.

Jacob nodded, a hint of glee flashing in his eyes. Since she was a rank 9, with a young master who was a wizard, taking care of a rank 10 was not entirely impossible.

If Jacob could see that, the old foxes were obviously aware of that too. Hence, they immediately knelt on one knee to express their loyalty to Leylin, “We are willing to be young master’s blades and obey all your instructions!”

‘These people...’ Leylin shook his head instead, feeling a little fed up with the situation. However, he had no choice but to continue pretending.

“Good, we leave now! We have to strive to catch them off their guard!” With a traitor like Mahnke, Leylin knew the strength of the Black Tiger pirates and what they could be hiding like the back of his hand.

“It’s too foolish to wait for them to reach the coast. I don’t want the battles to affect this territory...” Leylin looked around, spreading out a yellowed map. It showed the detailed topology of the area surrounding Faulen Island, and even contained information about the ocean currents and wind directions.

Just this map alone had a value of over ten gold coins, and it was something the Faulen Family had gained over decades of hardship and exploration. It definitely was not to be sold outside.

“The Black Tiger pirates are now here.” Leylin tapped at the map. This was an uninhabited island not far from the Faulan Island, and there wasn’t any shipping route nearby. Even with their opponents on alert, it was still possible to hide for a period of time.

Chapter 811 - Sneak Attack

Whoosh! The night sea winds had a fishy, chilly smell that made Jacob shrink back.

As a member of the Faulen Family, he might have long since gotten used to these winds and waves, but the deck that was creaking up and down, as well as the billowing sails above, made him as if he was in a dream. This feeling reached its peak when he saw Leylin, standing proudly at the head of the ship.

They were in a typical double mast sailboat. They weren't squeezed together even with over 80 people there.

But it wasn't difficult at all to acquire such a thing with the Faulen Family's status. No, what shocked Jacob was Young Master Leylin's behaviour!

'No... Actually everyone is shocked...' Jacob looked at the leaders beside him who were scared out of their wits, yet at the same time had a fire burning in their eyes, and chuckled wryly.

Just before they had left, Leylin had cast Nondetection in front of everyone. By Oghma! This was a rank 3 spell, and the young master had not used any items or scrolls at all!

That he could cast a rank 3 spell by himself meant Leylin was rank 7. Without any warning, their young master had become a rank 7 wizard!

‘Gods... Isn’t advancing as a wizard supposed to be the most challenging? Young master’s advancement to rank 5 just two years ago was already enough to have mouths fall agape... And now...’ Jacob sighed. His abundant experiences as an adventurer left him clear on what exactly a fifteen year old rank 7 wizard meant.

If nothing were to happen, he could possibly become a great rank 15 wizard in a few centuries of training! There were few great wizards in the Dambrath Kingdom, and a few of them hired by the royalty had great statuses. His majesty the King had generously given them positions as Earls and territory to rope them in.

However, no great wizard cared for such things that drove others crazy with envy. At their level, the only thing in their sights was the realm of Legends.

And now, a great wizard was about to appear in the Faulen Family? Jacob suddenly felt giddy.

“Cousin Leylin, you’ve worked hard in deceiving me...” Beside Leylin, Isabel didn’t have as many thoughts. While she seemed to be complaining, it was obvious that she was delighted by Leylin’s achievements.

“I never thought my cousin was a genius as a wizard!” Isabel’s eyes twinkled like there were countless stars in them.

“Hehe... everyone has their secrets, just as you do!” Leylin got closer, causing her to look panicked, “I anticipate the day where

you will tell me...”

“What kind of joke is this?” Isabel turned her head and left, while Leylin sank deep into thought.

‘There’s no other choice but to do this...’ Leylin sighed. The reason he had shown his strength right before the battle was to strengthen his men’s confidence and will to resist.

Otherwise, the moment they knew that they could be against the personal guard of a Marquis of the Kingdom, even if moral did not immediately crumble, it would be greatly diminished.

Now, with such a young wizard, some would think it was worth it to risk their lives. Even if those regular soldiers did not know what being a 15 year old rank 7 wizard implied, others would gladly warn or tell them.

‘Furthermore, our target this time is only a notorious group of pirates. Even if someone intentionally leaks this out, many would not believe it...’ Leylin sighed once more. He had already done all that he could to the best of his abilities, and all that was left was their luck.

“My lord, we’re here!” A sailor with triangular eyes and a gaze as sharp as a poisonous snake came before Leylin, reporting quietly. There was a thirst in his eyes for blood, as well as a fervour for destruction.

If this was a gaze seen in the manor, Leylin would send down the order for this person to be hung, but now?

‘This is the right attitude if you want to kill someone!’ Leylin was confident that with his methods, even if this person was a poisonous snake, he’d be able to tame him.

“Your name is Robin Hood? You’re a great first mate and navigator! Are you in charge of this ship as well?” Leylin observed the man. He could sense a bloody aura that came from frequent killings, which made it obvious that this person had a very ‘exciting’ life in private.

“Yes, young master Faulen!” Evidently, Robin Hood was surprised that Leylin had been able to remember his name.

“Good!” Leylin had his hands behind his back as he watched the faint image of the islet from the fog. He quickly commanded, “Send down the order. Everyone is to remain hidden. Try not to make any sounds.”

In order to take precautions against the detection and divination spells, Leylin had especially boosted himself with Nondetection before leaving, and had been exceptionally cautious and nimble along the way. It could be said that the chances of being discovered were very low.

Besides, even if they were discovered, nothing much changed except for the scale of the losses that would be incurred.

When the first wave sneakily swam up to the shore and began to mount a secret attack on the opponents' anchored ships, Leylin knew that the general conclusion had been decided.

Watching the bloody battles, Leylin suddenly laughed. "Seems like the pirates aren't as strong as I imagined them to be..."

Initially, he had thought that they had the support of the nobles and might have superb equipment and even maybe a magic weapon, but from the looks of it... These pirates wore shabby clothing, and there were even some people of other races and mixed blood in their midst. There weren't really powerful people in there, and it felt like they were just cannon fodder and not the real deal.

'Even if we manage to subdue these pirates, they would just be treated as replaceable?' Leylin stroked his chin as he thought of something.

In such a situation, where his side had been prepared and launched a secret attack with equipment of superior quality to theirs, there was no possibility of failure if their numbers were about equal.

'Of course, this is a world of exemplaries. The situation might change if a few powerful people show up,' Leylin stared at a corner of the camp on the barren island. He could sense powerful energy undulations from there.

"Is that leader of the Black Tiger pirates a rank 10 Professional?"

Leylin sneered, “Jacob, take over the command. Pay attention to their ships and don’t let anyone get away!”

“Understood, young master!” Jacob answered loudly. He already wanted to prostrate himself when he looked at Leylin’s skills as a commander. Leadership came naturally to the young master, and such a thing was something he had never been able to learn himself.

‘This potential... Does that mean there really is a darling child of the gods in this world?’ Jacob had no time to be bothered by the shock to his worldview, and did all he could to constrain the formation of the troops and surround the camp.

“Isabel, come with me. Let us see to that leader, Steve!” Leylin rapidly moved towards the frontlines of the battle, with Isabel following closely behind.

.....

As the infamous leader of the Black Tigers, Steve had the boorish and villainous face unique to pirates. He had long since lost an eye and an ear, the price he paid when his first mate mutinied against him.

Of course, this fellow who dared betrayed him had soon gotten his limbs cut off, and was tossed into the sea. The man could only repent with the sea god.

After being recruited by Marquis Louis, it had been made clear that if he were to be successful in this operation, he would become a knight with land of his own, and he might even become a real lord!

‘I’ll become a lord in the future!’ Every time he thought of this, Steve could not help but gaze at his right hand. He had lost it, among many other things, in ten years of bloody fights and struggles. Still, he felt like the sacrifice was worth it. As he was right now, he was a rank 10 fighter, and the Black Tigers that he led had made a name for themselves in these waters.

‘The target this time is only the manor of a baron that has lost most of its elites. How powerful can they be?’ Steve thought indifferently. If not for him restraining them with all his might, all his underlings would have gone out to have fun long ago.

Up to this point, everything was going well without a hitch. But all of a sudden, yells and shouts could be heard that immediately woke Steve up from his reverie.

“What’s going on?” Steve tossed the bottle of rum in his hand away, and his right hand opened up a huge tear in the tent. He arrived at the camp.

“It’s an enemy invasion! There are too many of them, and they have excellent equipment!” His second mate, a tiger-headed merman, came before him, expression unable to hide his panic.

After noticing the situation, Steve’s face twitched. This crafty

captain immediately felt that this was not going well, “Where did they come from? Why did the detection spells and alarm points not react? More importantly, who are they?”

Even now Steve didn’t think these people were sent by his target. With Leylin’s Nondetection spell, the detection magic artifacts he had bought at exorbitant prices lost their effects. The alarm points had all been discovered and removed by Leylin.

Steve grabbed the collar of the second mate and shouted, “Get the men and charge to the ship!”

Chapter 812 - Siege

The ambush was a huge blow to the Black Tigers' morale. Still, Steve retained some confidence in his men. Though they were nothing more than scumbags and trash, they possessed many skills. They would be able to stay alive despite the bad situation they currently found themselves in.

For what it was worth, they were pirates after all. Land fights were never their forte. Their true expertise lay in bombing, boarding, and fighting with ships. If he could only retreat to the ship, it would be perfectly easy for him to mount both offence and defence. It could even be possible for him to turn the tables.

'When the moment comes, I must absolutely wring this daring bastard's head off!' Steve thought to himself viciously.

With their captain's signal, the crew began to draw closer to the ship. However, a wave of burning heat suddenly approached them, causing the colour to drain from Steve's face. "Shit! Dodge, quickly!"

Boom! The enemy's fireball landed less than five metres away from him, and the resulting sea of flames engulfed almost everything in its vicinity. Steve managed to escape, but the rest weren't half as lucky. Even his trusty second mate, the one with the head of a tiger shark, was burnt to a crisp.

"Fireball! They have a wizard!" This sudden news was like a slap across Steve's face. Not only was his opponent sufficiently

equipped, they even had a strategic resource like a wizard.

Just then, he caught an eye of the said wizard. It was a young lad, his curly golden hair matching his deep blue eyes. He was barely an adult.

A wizard of this age? Steve furrowed his brows as he realised that the young lad looked faintly familiar.

“Hold up, he was one of the target of this mission! That’s the Faulens’ young master!” Steve was immediately reminded of him, and he had the urge to curse at his informant, “Wasn’t he supposed to be rank 5 at most? It doesn’t seem like it...”

“I want his head!” Steve was rid of any other choices at this stage of the game, and he could only roar orders as his muscles constricted.

Leylin spotted Steve at the same time. The extraordinary vibes he gave off showed that he was their leader, and he shouted as well, “He’s the head of the pirates. 50 gold coins for anyone who can finish him off, and on top of that you don’t have to pay tax anymore!”

“50 gold coins? And you get to not pay taxes? Charge!” Many of the guards went into a frenzy. This price alone was enough for ten lives; the guards charged up front without any second thoughts.

Of course, Leylin didn’t stand and watch idly. Two powerful

buffing spells descended upon his men, increasing their drive and strength. “Bear’s Endurance, Bull’s Strength!”

‘The wizards of this world are supported by the Weave, allowing them to use magical attacks and buffs extremely quickly...’ Leylin knew better than to neglect the importance of the Weave. The fact that it was able to continue to exist for so long meant it had to have some advantages.

And during the battle, Leylin realised that his men usually fared better if he enhanced their abilities using his power. Moreover, the Fireball from earlier was like a missile. Common people would not be able to escape its destructive powers.

‘With the support of the Weave, won’t a wizard with enough spell slots be a walking cannon?’ Leylin smiled, if the power of this world was how he imagined it to be, the status of wizards would probably be even higher.

At the same time, Steve showed what it meant to be a rank 10 warrior. “AH! Rapid Charge!” His entire body was enveloped in a hazy light. After triggering his distinctive warrior skill, it was as if he had turned into an armoured steel tank as he charged towards the guards.

Thump! Thump! Thump! With his great energy, he knocked down many of the guards. They were sent flying, as if they’d been hit by a high-speed train, and every now and then the sound of bones cracking rang out.

But the damage went both ways. Steve was injured by many of their spears and swords, and many bloody wounds appeared on his body. This degree of injury posed no hindrance to him, but the blood continuously leaking from his wounds would cause a bit of trouble. This was especially true as the pirates were surrounded, about to be wiped out by the oncoming soldiers.

“Surrender now, and in my name as a noble I’ll treat you right as a captive.” Leylin said. As long as he could capture Steve alive, maybe even have him become an eye witness, he would’ve gained incredible advantages for the Faulen Family.

“Surrender? To a brat like you?” Steve mocked back. It was like he’d seen something ridiculous.

“Or should I say... Do you think I’m limited to just this ability?” A sinister smile slipped onto Steve’s face as a sacred light engulfed him wholly.

‘Is this... Divine force?’ Leylin stepped back. He had little experiences with this sort of power, but the impression it left was engraved deeply in his mind.

“Bless, Cure Light Wounds, Nightshield!” In the blink of an eye, Steve cast three rank 1 spells on his body. Leylin’s brows wrinkled as he watched Steve’s wounds recover quickly under the brilliant light of divine force.

‘Divine force is indeed troublesome! Instant spells like these can be restored through daily prayers, so even with the usage

limitations it's still unfair...'

Steve was back to his prime condition after the buffs, and his injuries had healed.

"Kill!" He charged towards Leylin with great power, and a clandestine glow covered the sword in his hand.

"Eldritch Blast!" The qi of a rank 10 fighter concentrated in his hand to become a shining blade which blasted out.

Schlick! The soldiers in front of Leylin were hacked into two halves, and blood and gore splattered in all directions.

'Well, this is troublesome...' Leylin sighed, massaging his temples.

[Data collection completed! Creating target entry.]

The A.I. Chip reported, quickly projecting Steve's details in front of him.

[Name: Steve. Gender: Male. Estimated stats, Strength: 10+, Agility: 7, Vitality: 6. Spirit: 4. Professions: Rank 10 Fighter,

Rank 3 Cleric! Evaluation: Undecipherable undulations in his right hand, target is extremely dangerous!]

‘Right hand?’ Leylin looked at the iron hook in Steve’s right hand. The originally dull blade was now drenched in blood, with strips of flesh hanging off it. It looked exceptionally macabre.

“I’ll go up to block him! You wait for an opening to try and cast spells!” Isabel drew her black sword out as she saw Steve nearing Leylin, becoming a human shield.

“Where did this wench come from? Piss off!” Steve’s eyes were bloodshot. The sword in his left hand slashed down mercilessly, violent like a gust of evil wind. It had none of the protective care one normally held for a lady.

Clang! The machete was blocked by a black sword, and the collision created a profound noise.

“My revenge starts with you!” Isabel’s expression was ice-cold.

“There’s so many incompetent idiots I’ve killed, who knows which ones you’re from?” Even with such a reply, Steve had already grown wary of Isabel. Considering that she could hold off a rank 10 fighter who was going all out, she was no easy opponent.

Thump! The iron hook in Steve’s left hand shot out like a venomous snake, but it too was blocked by Isabel’s sword. Sparks

flew everywhere.

The impending battle between the two caused many pirates, and even her own soldiers, back away subconsciously. They didn't dare to get caught in the fight.

'Looks like I still don't have enough manpower to kill a rank 10 fighter.' Leylin thought in worry as he watch the gruesome exchange between the two.

'According to the data, I'll need at least 200 fully armed elites to kill Steve, and even they will have to be willing to give up their lives and pay a painful cost. Of course, if we have more Professionals the injuries would be halved, but all in all I don't have enough manpower right now...

'And although Isabel had enhanced her own strength through demonic sacrifices, she still isn't enough to be an opponent...' Progress in one's profession wasn't as just incremental. And anyway, Leylin didn't believe that those demons wanted nothing from Isabel anyway.

"Ugh..." Suddenly, a groan sounded from the battlefield. It was Isabel's.

One of her arms had been fractured, and she was forced to hold it in her sleeve. And yet, she remained as stoic as ever. Things like that which could have caused ordinary girls to weep and scream did not disturb Isabel at all.

“I’m afraid this cannot go on, I’ll have to unseal it! But...” Isabel throw a glance at the onlookers and hesitated.

“Isabel! I think it’s time to withdraw!” Just as Isabel was about to give it her all and charge at Steve, Leylin’s voice came through. Out of her confidence in Leylin, she abandoned her original plan and start backing away.

“Thinking of leaving?” The expression on Steve’s face was sinister as ever, but that changed when an arrow was shot.

Shoo! The arrow was like a venomous snake. Its angle was tricky, leaving Steve with no choice but to retreat.

Splat! The arrow shot into the ground behind him, its feathered end still quivering, making it look like a small snake trying to burrow into the ground.

Chapter 813 - Post-Battle Review

‘That was close!’ Steve could feel some cold sweat on his palm. Only he knew how dangerous that had been.

Once he regained his senses, he glanced at Leylin. The youth now had a crossbow in his hands, and there was a merciless expression on his face. Isabel had pushed her way to stand beside him, and aside from her Jacob and a few other soldiers had rushed over in a hurry as well.

With Isabel delaying them, Leylin had enough time to defeat the enemy and even seize the pirate ship. Now, Jacob brought the rest of the soldiers and the many crossbows in the Faulen Family’s collection and surrounded the area.

The Faulen soldiers had gained the upper hand in all the other zones, and more and more soldiers gathered together. Under the light of the flames, Steve’s face turned pale as a corpse. He knew very well that after the battle was over, the Black Tigers might just be erased from history.

‘What’s going on? Why did things turn out this way?’ Steve was completely dazed.

However, his fox-like cunning that had been honed over the years told him that this was the time to escape. As long as there were some people left alive, he would be able to pull the Black Tigers back together, and bring about their rise once more. When the time came, he would exact extreme vengeance on this young

wizard!

“Shoot!” But how could Leylin give him the chance to do so? With his command, the countless crossbows that Jacob directed on his own produced terrifying sounds. Numerous arrows blocked all the escape routes that Steve had.

“Damn it!” Steve cursed, his figure twisting at a strange angle in midair. A dark shield appeared, crashing into a sharp arrow.

The dark-coloured shield shattered to pieces, but the power of the arrow was greatly reduced. It could only leave a shallow cut on Steve’s body.

Boom! Steve’s body fell freely to the ground. He glared at Leylin venomously, and then rushed out of the camp. Once he got outside, he would definitely be able to leave with ease. He was still a rank 10 fighter after all.

At this moment, things suddenly changed! A huge white spiderweb opened up from the ground, shrouding him in darkness.

‘But when did he-?’ Steve’s expression filled with fear as he recognised this web, ‘Rank 2 spell, Web. Once it twines around me, I’ll be caught...’

He looked fierce as he raised the sword in his left hand. However, Leylin had long since set this trap. How could he give Steve the chance to escape?

“Ray of Enfeeblement! Sleep! Restrict!”

A few rank 1 spells flashed over Steve’s head. With the drain from the huge battle just prior, Steve was unable to dodge them in time. Immediately after, he felt a sense of confusion, as his body suddenly weakened.

Clang! His machete fell to the ground, and immediately after Steve was caught up in the web. It was extremely sticky, and even a reckless bull would not be able to escape from it.

“Take aim. Prepare to shoot! The opponent is a rank 10 warrior, so be careful!” At this moment, the soldiers holding crossbows aimed at Steve calmly. Only morons would miss an immobile target like this.

“You’re still thinking of running because you have a trump card up your sleeve, don’t you?” Leylin approached the spiderweb, watching Steve from above, eyes full of mockery.

“Don’t think you can hide the Lifesteal effect on your right hand. I’m a wizard!” When Leylin said this, he could see that Steve’s eyes were first filled with fear and despair, followed by a desperate struggle.

Leylin snickered, quickly retreating and dodging the bloody rays shooting from his hand.

“Be careful. The hook on his right hand has the Lifesteal effect. Don’t let it touch you, or your life force will be absorbed...”

Leylin smirked at Steve, causing him to pale even further. The terror from being completely seen through caused the pirate to feel muddle-headed. “You’re a devil. A devil!”

“Knock him unconscious,” Leylin’s eyebrows furrowed, “And then get rid of his arms and legs!” Without the assistance of a powerful cleric, such terrifying injuries would end up crippling him.

As for how to deal with this person, Leylin did not have plans yet. As he had been at the forefront in hindering the Faulen Family, he should have made contact with Viscount Tim before, which made him a pretty good witness. But who would believe the words of a pirate? At the most, it would cause some slight trouble for the Viscount.

“His true value is in keeping him from Tim...” Leylin watched the amputated Steve who was now unconscious, his eyes profound. In his view, the pirate only had two functions. One was as bait, attracting more assassins and experts over from the other party so he could ambush them. However, things could easily go wrong that way. If an existence that Leylin could not deal with arrived, that was just shooting himself in the foot.

On the other hand, he could use Steve to negotiate with Tim, forcing the Viscount to back off. After all, the Faulen Family wasn’t the only one with land in the seas. Once his side showed their power and sent Steve back, saying that they had no plans to

go to war, he could be able to achieve a period of harmony.

Of course, Leylin never counted on the benevolence and hesitation of his enemies for his own safety. However, giving himself more time was a good method. After all, his strength was still increasing by the day, and on top of that with the complete wipe-out of the probing on the Faulen Family, perhaps they would pause for a bit anyway?

Leylin stroked his chin, “Be quick about it. Bring all the slaves. Kill those who resist.”

““Understood!”” Numerous soldiers yelled together. After seeing that their leader, Steve, had been taken captive, most of the pirates had lost their morale, and with the suppression by Isabel and the crossbowmen they were utterly defeated. Even those futilely thinking of swimming across the sea were killed by the sailors on the ship, not letting any leave. Soon, a whole region of the sea was dyed red.

In this situation, even the fiercest pirate would involuntarily have thoughts of surrender. Soon enough, the sounds of weaponry being tossed to the ground sounded. The soldiers hurried to tie these people up and sent them to the ship.

“Set fire to this place before we leave,” Leylin commanded.

Following that, he returned to the double mast ship he had arrived in. At the moment, the seized pirate ship had been tied up behind theirs. It was the spoils of their battle.

Seeing the sea of red, Leylin listened as Jacob reported, “Nine soldiers are dead, fifteen critically injured. The rest have some form of light injuries...”

This was even though this was a surprise attack and they had the advantage in equipment. Jacob could not help but feel embarrassed at the results. He’d gotten a better understanding of the ferociousness of pirates today. If the Black Tigers had managed to set foot on Faulen Island, the consequences would’ve been dire.

“Mm. What have we captured?” Leylin looked calm, not minding such a tiny issue.

“We have killed 37 pirates and taken 52 prisoner. There are a few with unknown whereabouts. We have taken Steve, and the Black Tigers can be said to be completely wiped out.” At this point, Jacob began to look excited, “It’s a pity that there aren’t any spoils. There’s only some rum and jerky. We haven’t found any letters or anything...”

Leylin shook his head and laughed involuntarily, “Pirates are poor anyway. What more do you want?”

These low-ranked pirates did not have much money on them anyway, and if they were lucky enough to get a large amount, that would quickly be wasted on the bad alcohol in the harbour, barbequed meat and gambling dens. When, on the next day, they had not a single copper in their pockets, they would follow their captain to sea like wolves, roaring as they attacked other ships.

‘Even if you add up the wealth of all the prisoners, that would still be nothing compared to Steve’s own private hoard!’ Leylin chuckled.

‘I really need to interrogate Steve well. Though it’s unlikely that he has a letter from nobility, I need to know about his stash and things like that...’

If he could find evidence of a connection with Viscount Tim, Leylin would not have to be vexed. However, this was impossible. The other side would not be so foolish as to leave letters and the like behind. Hence, Leylin could only give this a try without placing too much hope in it.

As for money... that was just a consolation prize. At the very least, these soldiers would need to be rewarded amply for the deaths, else nobody would be willing to work under him.

Having taken care of everything, Leylin walked to the hold of the ship. As there were many more captives to return with, the concealed hold was very squeezey and somewhat chaotic. Leylin naturally would not imprison the group on the pirate ship behind them, that would only be creating trouble for himself.

Even in this situation, Isabel had a room of her own. This was a privilege reserved for the nobility and the strong.

“Can I come in?” Leylin asked after walking up to her door.

“Please!”

Opening the door, Leylin entered the room and cast a silencing spell. This immediately resulted in a serious look on Isabel’s face.

Leylin twitched his nose. There was a herbal smell in the air, and Isabel’s clothing was slightly in disarray. Evidently, in her hurry, she had not had everything arranged properly.

Chapter 814 - Thoughts

“You won’t be able to do things like that easily on your own, you know.” Leylin chuckled as he sat beside Isabel, pulling at her arm.

“Don’t...” Isabel began to struggle.

“Sit properly!” Leylin’s thunderous expression made Isabel’s momentum to flag. Even the strength she possessed seemed to weaken greatly.

Leylin rolled Isabel’s sleeves up. What he saw was not the pale and exquisite skin belonging to a young girl, but a strange arm filled with scales. On the upper arm, there was a curved injury that had been caused by Steve.

“Demonification? And it seems to be a rather high-level conversion ritual...” Leylin raised his shoulders, and then skilfully used magic energy to heal her wounds. He then bound them.

“It’s ugly, isn’t it...” At some point, Isabel turned away, her voice choked with sobs.

“No, in fact it’s still alright,” Leylin answered seriously. He didn’t look much better when he transformed as a Warlock, and became an existence which had practically abandoned its human form.

“One more thing...” Leylin appeared to be focused on healing

her, and he spoke softly, “I want to set up a private fleet. I hope for your help.”

“Become a pirate? Why?” Isabel was dazed for a moment. A private fleet was only a dressed up way to refer to a pirate crew.

Leylin smirked at the question. “They’ve come and bullied us, it’s only fitting that we repay the favour.”

“As for the people to be used... I was planning to use my status as the master of the territory here to hang the Black Tiger pirates. Let’s just consider it recycling our trash!”

“In addition, I’ve found a pretty good first mate for you. Robin Hood performed well today, and more importantly, he is used to the ways of pirates. With our people as the backbone and the pirates at our foundation level, we can use the pirate ship we seized and Steve’s wealth to quickly assemble a crew. I’ll need you to control them tightly...”

Leylin swiftly bound her wounds in gauze, and Isabel wiped away the tears on her face, regaining her robust and healthy image. However, Leylin felt that the crying girl from before more suited the memory of his young cousin.

“Why do you think I will agree?” Isabel looked at Leylin.

“Because it’s a request from your dear cousin!” Leylin chuckled, resulting in a flush on Isabel’s face.

“I’ll consider this matter. Go out first!” Evidently, Isabel was feeling cramped in the narrow hull alone in a room with Leylin.

“I quietly await your favourable response!” Leylin headed out, closing the door politely. In reality, he knew that she would agree; this was also good for her.

‘A high ranked demon? Goodness...’ Leylin stroked his chin, his eyes twinkling.

Controlling a pirate crew may seem slightly immoral on the surface; after all, it was dishonourable for a noble to do something so sinful. However, Leylin knew that under the cover of glory, sophistication and grandeur, the nobles of this world all concealed some sort of evil within them. Every gold coin they used was stained with the blood and tears of innocents.

Even his father, Baron Jonas, had always wanted to obtain support from some pirates, or create a raiding fleet to attack others himself. He had been working hard on this, but he had been a noble for far too short a time. It was difficult enough to just get his own territory organised, so he had yet to fulfill his wishes.

As for offending pirates? Heh, no noble was going to care about that!

‘This outer sea was discovered recently, so there aren’t a lot of great powers operating here. It’s still a piece of blank paper. How could Marquis Louis alone get all the benefits on the sea?’ Leylin

snickered. Whether it was purchasing high-grade spell materials or creating a wizard tower, everything required a huge amount of resources and gold coins. How could he surrender the profits he could get on the outer sea?

On top of that, he wasn't one to take beatings without retaliating. He would definitely ruthlessly pay the Marquis back for his 'favour'. He was just someone with control over the Baltic archipelago, a trade fleet, and a few pirate groups, so was he that amazing? If not for having apprehensions about the families on Faulen Island, Leylin alone could take him on in a war, and give him a huge headache.

'After establishing a pirate group, cousin will have a place to take shelter. After all, the gods don't focus much on a place like the outer sea where crooks mingle with honest folk. The occasional sacrifice can be hidden as much as possible...'

Whether Isabel could understand the reasons behind Leylin's painstaking efforts was another matter. Leylin was sure that as long as he was the one making the request, she would not reject him.

The waves kept crashing into the body of the ship, shaking it slightly. A few seagull-like birds were soaring in the sky, producing cries from the distance.

"This isn't too far from Faulen Island. It's a short journey, so this shouldn't be a problem..." Leylin held onto the railing, watching the dark sea below him. The sea was never a peaceful place. Tsunamis, storms or even numerous deep-sea creatures could

destroy a whole fleet in an instant.

Hence, for sailors on the outer sea, it was like treading on thin ice every single day with the possibility of entering the embrace of death at any moment.

‘There seem to be countless gods with dominion over the sea, like the Storm Goddess that Steve worships.’ Leylin began to look serious.

Steve surprisingly had some abilities as a cleric. While he could only cast low-ranked divine spells, that was enough for Leylin to be on his guard.

Fortunately, the Storm Goddess was known for being temperamental. She regularly caused tsunamis and storms, destroying numerous ships and fishing boats. Her faith stemmed from the terror she induced.

As a result, Steve must have made the Storm Goddess feel delighted during a certain ceremony or while praying, which was why she had made an exception and bestowed some divine force to him. If not, no matter how Leylin looked at it, he could not link Steve to a clergy.

Even so, that was still very troublesome. No matter how much of a bastard Steve was, he was a cleric, and Leylin could not get rid of him easily.

If he was alone outside, he could eliminate him easily. As long as news did not get out, all was fine. However, there were too many people here and so many prisoners. There were also the escapees. There was no way to dispute the fact that Steve was in his hands. If he were to die, things would be difficult to handle.

Leylin did not want to attract even attention of the church of a real god, much less hostility.

‘What a pity. He’s a rank 10 warrior, and a cleric at that...’ A hint of red light appeared in Leylin’s hands. The Devilblood Dagger flew between his fingers, rippling with a dangerous luster that quickly died down.

While he could now transform the flesh devoured into spiritual energy and hasten his advancement as a wizard, it wasn’t without any requirements.

He needed to completely digest the energy he absorbed between successive devourings. In addition, this sudden increase in power would be a great test in his control as a wizard.

If a rank 1 wizard rapidly became a Legend, he would first be destroyed by the berserk, uncontrollable magic in his own body. Thankfully, Leylin had a huge advantage in this area. His main body was already half god, and his control of energy was exquisite. Magic was similar both here and in the Magus World, and his strength as a wizard was only equivalent to that of a rank 1 or 2 Warlock.

This set of worries was why Steve had been lucky enough to survive this far. Otherwise, Leylin would have long since reduced him to a pile of bones.

Leylin had specific requirements when it came to flesh now. Only Professionals or powerful demonic beasts met his requirements for life force. As for those pirates? They were nothing to Leylin, and even if he were to devour all of them, they could not be compared to Steve. This was even ignoring the impurities in their energy.

“The ranking of energy in this world is very strictly regulated...” Leylin took a look at his stats. As he had not used the Devilblood Dagger, they stats were the same as before.

“For an adult, 1, 10 and 20 are all thresholds!” Leylin had a greater understanding of these numbers.

It was difficult for a normal human to break past the value of 1 in any stat, becoming a Professional. And these difficulties compounded in the future the stronger one became.

10 points was a huge threshold to break through. Leylin’s own greatest stat was his spirit at 7. Based on his calculations, it was only after he became a rank 10 wizard that he could break through this barrier.

‘Wizards above rank 10 are considered experts in the World of Gods... So is this the boundary line that divides us? Just one stat breaking past 10 makes one an expert...’ Leylin had a feeling that increasing his stat points in this world would be very hard,

increasing in difficulty the further he got. Once his spirit reached 10, and especially after he became a great wizard, perhaps even the Devilblood Dagger could only give him light support.

‘A stringent world that suppresses power that is out of the ordinary. Even the gods have to abide by the rules of the world...’ Leylin’s eyes burned with fervour, eager to give this a try.

At this moment, he heard cheers elsewhere, “We’re here! I see the lighthouse at the harbour!”

Leylin raised his eyes and looked into the distance. As expected, there was a yellow light seen from within the fog. It represented the warmth of the Faulen Harbour, and Leylin could not help but reveal a smile.

Chapter 815 - Return And Secret Plans

The moment he got off the ship, Leylin saw someone unexpected. The housekeeper of the manor, Leon, had come before him. It was evident that he had been waiting for a long time, and there were even water droplets on his clothes formed from the mist. “Young master, young master! The master is back, and he’s said that you are to notify him once you’re on shore!”

“Father has returned? Good, I’ll see him right away. Take care of the things here, as well as the spoils of war and the captives...” Compared to sneaking around during the last attack, Leylin was now strutting about boldly. He was even hoping to intimidate those who were harbouring unlawful thoughts with this victory.

However, the only ship entering the harbour was Leylin’s own warship. The Black Tiger itself had disappeared with his cousin Isabel, accompanied by a portion of the pirates.

Only a few unlucky pirates were here besides the few spoils of war. Of course, there was also the ex-captain, Steve.

“Understood, young master!” Leon bowed low. Just the injuries from the soldiers behind Leylin alone made it clear that this battle had been very intense.

“Mm. Jacob, get Steve. Let us be off!” Leylin got on the carriage by himself, followed by Jacob with their prisoner. Steve had a black sack over his head, as Leylin did not trust such a high-ranking captive to his subordinates. If he did, there was a chance of

something going wrong.

“Father...” The moment the carriage got to the manor, Leylin saw his current parents, Baron Jonas and Lady Sarah. They stood in wait at the door of the manor, eyes full of worry.

Leylin immediately got off the carriage and was pulled into Mistress Sarah’s arms, “Oh, my poor child...” It was obvious that even though she somewhat had an idea of what Leylin had done, Mistress Sarah was still worried.

“It’s good that you’re alright!” Baron Jonas maintained his poise as a noble, though there was a hint of joy in his eyes.

Leylin looked past his father, and then at his mentor Ernest. The wizard gave him an encouraging look of approval, and dragged his wizard robe closer around himself, hiding with the crowd. Wizards weren’t that good at expressing themselves.

At this moment, Leylin saw numerous elite troops behind Baron Jonas, all wearing armour. Their cold gazes made him feel a sense of danger.

“Rank 5 warriors! And there are so many at that. Father, where did you get them from?” Leylin could see respect in the eyes of the fighters, especially from their leader, but there wasn’t the reliance and concern that their own men had. These troops were evidently reinforcements from an external source.

However, this was a trivial matter.

“Child, don’t get so reckless in the future. It’s unbecoming of a noble to rashly lead troops alone...” Jonas admonished Leylin. If his only successor were to die in this battle, he would not be able to handle it.

“By the way, Father, please allow me to show off my spoils as well as the captives...” Leylin clapped his hands, and Jacob himself brought Steve up.

Though his limbs had already been cut off, and he was basically a cripple without the help of high-level divine spells, he still needed to be watched.

“Oh?” Baron Jonas’ eyebrows lifted, not reacting at all to the captives and junk blades that Leylin showed.

In his opinion, Leylin had merely eliminated a small wave of pirates, maybe less than 20 in total. They were probably fishermen who had lost to their desire for wealth, which was why he didn’t pay much attention to them.

But then Leylin lifted the black sack over Steve’s head, exposing the malicious face to the daylight. Due to the blood loss, his face had paled, which did nothing to reduce the fear caused from looking at his face. Even Mistress Sarah shrieked, taking a few steps back in her shock and disgust.

“Leylin, you frightened your mother. You shouldn’t dirty the eyes of a noblewoman with such a lowly captive...” Baron Jonas had been born as a noble of a military family, and he did not feel uncomfortable when met with this situation. But even his brows furrowed slightly.

Jonas could not understand why Leylin had brought a disgusting captive with sweat, blood and grievous wounds in front of him. What he did not see was that the elite warriors behind him now had a different look in their eyes.

Although Steve was crippled, the thick calluses on his body and the firm muscles mixed with the powerful aura of a high-ranked fighter that had yet to dissipate. They had an inkling about what this was.

“This is Steve, leader of the Black Tigers.” Leylin said simply, but that caused Baron Jonas’ eyes to widen.

“Gods!” Baron Jonas no longer cared about the filth on Steve’s body as he approached him, pushing aside the messy hair at his forehead to size him up carefully.

“Indeed it’s him. This is the leader of the Black Tigers, rank 10 fighter Steve! Numerous large chambers of commerce have jointly set up a bounty of 500 gold coins for his capture! One of the bounty postings is even at our port, I couldn’t get it wrong...”

A long while later, the baron sighed and stared at his son with a complicated expression. This child seemed to always surprise him.

His expedition might even have resulted in him being killed by assassins had Leylin not requested Ernest to come help out.

Still, he asked with disbelief, “Since Steve is here, where’s the Black Tigers?”

“They’ve been wiped out,” Leylin answered lightly. Jacob and the soldiers behind puffed up their chests in pride, staring hard at the elite warriors behind the Baron.

“Good! Seems like we need to have a serious talk.” Baron Jonas had a complicated expression on his face.

After Leylin came back, laughter and merriness returned to the manor once more. Even the housekeeper Leon, who always looked gloomy, revealed a rare smile as he directed Clara and Claire to prepare the banquet.

During this period of preparation, the baron stayed in his study room, having chased the maids out to leave only Leylin and Ernest behind other than himself.

“The information Leylin provided was very helpful. Even though I had to pay a huge price, I’ll take care of the issues with the church of knowledge...” Baron Jonas’ voice was hoarse and low. Leylin astutely noticed his bloodshot eyes and the bits of white hair near his ears.

It was obvious that being oppressed by a person of high status

like Marquis Louis left the baron stressed and vexed. Though they could now act a bit more freely, the trauma from the Marquis' actions had yet to dissipate.

“It’s only my duty. After all, I’m part of the Faulen Family!” Leylin appeared to be very humble.

This attitude had Baron Jonas nodding inside, “Since we know who our opponent is, things will be easier. Though I met with a few assassination attempts during the trip to the continent, I’m thankfully unharmed. I even got to see Earl Griffith!”

“Earl Griffith, the warlord of that place?” Leylin’s eyes twinkled, immediately remembering him. It seemed that Baron Jonas had paid a price, yielding a share of profits to acquire some support from the regional nobility.

“They’ve dispatched a group of horsemen with numerous rank 5 fighters. The leader is a rank 9, which will be enough to ensure the safety of our manor...” Baron Jonas watched Leylin with a sorry look in his eyes.

He believed that the assassination attempt on his son was because he had taken most of the elites. If not for that, he wouldn’t have been forced to struggle against a terrible group of pirates.

He had tried to leave behind Ernest and Jacob who were both Professionals to protect the port. However, relying on the protection of others was not a long-term solution. Leylin frowned slightly.

Baron Jonas saw all this, and it caused him to nod even more. ‘This child already has enough wisdom to lead our family.’

“Well then, how do you think Steve should be dealt with? After all, he is your prisoner...” Baron Jonas chuckled, wanting to see how Leylin would act.

“Dispatch a messenger to make negotiations and then return him to Marquis Louis. In exchange we can set up a peace treaty. How about that? Our family is quite weak after all...” Leylin did not hold back as he spoke.

“Good!” Baron Jonas was on the verge of applauding his child. He definitely had not been so rational at such an age; he would have complained about his vengeance after the humiliation.

Seeing this ability to give up and maintain a low profile, Baron Jonas would hand the family over to Leylin even if he was useless in other areas.

“Who do you think is the most suitable?”

“Bishop Tapris of the church of knowledge. He’s a friend to both sides, so he would make a suitable messenger.” Leylin emphasised that he was a ‘friend’, and Baron Jonas obviously could tell what Leylin was implying.

He muttered to himself, “He is a good choice...”

With his status as a bishop of the church of knowledge, Tapris was the most suitable mediator. He could even increase the prestige of the god of knowledge this way, so he probably wouldn't reject them.

After everything was settled, Leylin mumbled, "Father, I still have some things to tell Master Ernest..."

Chapter 816 - Trade

Leylin's solemn tone immediately had Jonas on his guard. He glanced towards Ernest, and the man immediately flicked his fingers. He'd cast Nondetection and Sound Isolation.

With all the preparation done, Leylin spoke quietly, "I've already become a rank 7 wizard..."

"What? Wha- what?" Ernest's eyes grew as round as saucers. He'd been completely thrown off his lack of reaction.

"Hasn't it been less than a year since you broke through to rank 6?" Ernest's expression was comical, as if he wanted to both cry and burst out in laughter.

"Oh Goddess, do you speak the truth?" Ernest's face was on the verge of pressing into Leylin's nose.

"In the name of the Goddess of the Weave, Mystra, I swear that all I say is true!" Leylin looked serious as he swore on the name of the goddess that numerous wizards held faith in.

The price of offending the Goddess of the Weave was that one could possibly be permanently restricted from using the Weave, rendering them a piece of trash. Leylin's pledge was very serious, and Ernest believed him immediately.

"Heavens, what are you? A bastard son of Mystra?" This rate of

advancement immediately depressed Ernest. He was still a mid-rank 9 wizard, so by the looks of it Leylin would probably catch up to him in a year or two.

It was normal to be overtaken by one's student, but to be surpassed by a punk who wasn't even twenty yet? Ernest grew very dispirited, almost on the verge of hiding away into a corner and drawing circles on the ground.

Meanwhile, Baron Jonas turned awkward, not getting it at all. He truly knew little about wizards, so he immediately suppressed his awkwardness to ask, "Ernest, my friend, what does this mean? Why the reaction?"

"Oh, my apologies, my friend!" Ernest flushed, and then replaced that with more fervour, "Leylin is a fifteen year old rank 7 wizard! From what I know this talent puts him among the top hundred talents of the past 300 years!"

At this point, he turned serious, "Don't underestimate this ranking. Many of them became great wizards in the future, with some even becoming Legends..."

"...Cough cough... So..." This instantly shocked Baron Jonas. He watched his son, eyes full of disbelief.

"While I don't have any acknowledgment from the wizard guild, it's no problem to cast rank 3 spells..." Leylin looked towards his mentor, "If news of this gets out during negotiations, do you think Marquis Louis will back off?"

The great chances of Leylin becoming a great wizard was enough to inspire fear. After all, few high-ranked wizards in the Dambrath Kingdom obeyed the royal family. If they found out that the Faulen Family had a genius wizard, the possibility of the other side conceding was high.

Of course, the other possibility was that they would be driven into a corner, sparing no expense to eliminate Leylin so as to avoid any repercussions. This way, they would not be harmed. Of course, they might be driven to a corner and spared no expense to kill Leylin in order to take care of whatever repercussions there might be. This way, they would not be at harm.

“Well, that’s very possible, but there are also other options. After all, growth and talent don’t represent power...” Ernest warned.

“No, no! This news absolutely cannot get out. I will send down an order for everyone to keep their lips sealed!” Baron Jonas immediately understood. Even if there was a mere 0.0001% possibility, he was unwilling to risk Leylin dying.

After all, with Leylin’s talent, it would only be a matter of time before he became a high-ranked wizard if nurtured well. He even had hope to become a Legend! Compared to that, the losses now meant nothing.

Seeing his father and master so resolute, Leylin could only laugh wryly and toss this thought away.

“Alright! However, Father, please allow me to train my magic in secret outside the manor in the future...”

“Training in secret...” Ernest could not understand it. Wizards weren’t the kind to practice hard like that; was there a need to abandon a life of luxury in order to train one’s will?

But watching this student of his, a 15 year old who had become a rank 7, Ernest wisely chose to shut his mouth. Leylin’s achievements would represent everything. Who knew, this method could allow him to make rapid progress.

Ernest touched his chin, feeling that he might should probably start training like this.

“Since your mentor isn’t against it, I have no opinions. Remember that you’re the future of our family, always prioritise your safety! Even if I were to lose the Faulen Island, I can’t lose you. Do you understand?” Baron Jonas warned.

“Yes!” Leylin nodded then followed up, “There’s something else, and it regards the management of the family.”

“Oh! Seems like you’re giving me a lot of surprises today!” Baron Jonas was actually extremely fatigued now, but he still rubbed at the area between his eyebrows, looking like he was listening closely.

“I think we should alter our system of giving rewards based on

the services rendered at our family port.”

Leylin’s first words were already astonishing, “I noticed that this occurred because we’re too weak to protect our own territory. It’s likely that we’ll have a lot of enemies coveting our land. We need to recruit even more soldiers and Professionals to expand out power, which means we need more sources of revenue.”

“That’s easy to say, but most of the trade on these seas is taken up by Marquis Louis’ Baltic archipelago. What can we offer?” Baron Jonas smiled wryly. No noble would reject opportunities to expand their strength and wealth. He’d also explored this before, but had not gotten any gains.

“Leylin must’ve mentioned this because he has a proposal. Let’s consider it first.” Ernest was aware that this student of his always made plans before acting, and would never say anything without thinking it through beforehand. This aroused his interest.

“I’ve checked, and there are only three things that make great profits with a foundation in sea trade: slaves, sea salt and sugar,” Leylin’s eyes glinted, “The slave trade has a bad reputation and it’s been controlled by Marquis Louis. We can’t interfere with that, so I’d choose sea salt and sugar!”

“Sea salt and... sugar?” Baron Jonas scratched his hair in confusion, “But our island isn’t anything like those in the south with spices and cane sugar. Those plants can’t survive here...”

“No! I plan to buy coarse sugar, and then refine it into high-grade

white sugar for sale. As for the sea salt, I'm planning to use fish floss!"

"Fish floss?!"

"Yes! Mash the flesh of the fish and dry it in the sun, and then use techniques to preserve it for a long time. Because there's salt and meat, I'm sure it will be welcomed by the commoners and adventurers on the continent!"

Leylin was someone who'd travelled over from another world. He'd be foolish if he didn't use the knowledge he gained from his previous world to gain some benefits.

Though there were differences in the physical laws of the two worlds, there were still some similarities. Concerned about the family's strength, Leylin was trying to expand their revenue to help himself in the future. He'd long since thought this through.

While he only somewhat remembered the methods to refine sugar and create fish floss by drying them in the sun, that was alright. He was a noble! As long as he supplied them with a general idea, his underlings would make it a reality.

Though Leylin remembered a lot more as well, he'd run tests through the years and he realised that he could only build an industry around these two items, they complemented the laws of the World of Gods.

As for other techniques, it wasn't that they could not be used, but they would destabilize the situation now. Paper would definitely be valued highly by the church of knowledge, so he could easily gain the favour of Oghma. However, he would attract the ire of the other gods, and Leylin was afraid of that.

Refined sugar and fish floss were two things that wouldn't have as great an effect.

After Leylin explained his thoughts on this industry, Baron Jonas sank into deep thought. While he did not know about this, Leylin's words seemed to be plausible. At the very least, Ernest beside him had eyes that were twinkling as if he had seen sudden huge profits.

"In that case, you can try that!" At the end, Baron Jonas agreed. After all, Leylin had proven with his battle achievements that he was not just a braggart. What was the harm of letting him try? At worst, it could be considered business training.

As a successor of a noble family, one might not need to know how to manage businesses, but they couldn't afford to be cheated by businessmen.

"However, be cautious!" Jonas warned after thinking it over once more. He was still worried.

"I understand. Many thanks, Father!" Leylin stood and bowed.

In reality, he just needed to have the approval of the Baron in

name. As for the people and money? Steve would probably be more than 'willing' to provide that.

"The banquet's almost prepared, let's go together. By the way, where's your cousin Isabel?" Jonas asked suddenly at the end.

"Oh... I let her leave..." Leylin's eyes flashed with his unhesitating answer. He still didn't want to divulge the fact that he was establishing a pirate crew.

"Is she gone? That's good too!" Baron Jonas nodded and did not ask more, leaving with his hands behind his back.

It was evident that he'd long since had his own conjectures on Isabel's change. However, the situation had been urgent then, and he'd felt bad about abandoning a diligent branch member of the Faulen Family. That was why he'd said nothing then, and now that she'd left, there would now be no awkwardness between them.

Chapter 817 - Tim

‘Looks like Father already knew about it long ago...’ Leylin immediately arrived at his own conclusion after listening to the baron’s words. Had he not promptly made the decision to send Isabel away, the baron would perhaps have dealt with her upon his return.

After that, terrible rumours might have spread, and his cousin might even have ‘died of illness’. After all, the churches in this world did not even slightly tolerate the followers of devils and demons, and even their friends and family would be implicated.

With a tacit mutual understanding, the father and son went to the banquet, as if they had completely forgotten about Isabel.

The banquet was bustling with noise and excitement. Xuno, that wandering bard who had been seen at the port lately, had come to perform. His voice was as sweet as a skylark’s, and the few short poems he recited earned cheers from the whole hall.

However, when it was over, Leylin saw that Xuno was invited to his father’s study room. It seemed like the Baron had not invited him purely for the performance.

However, that meant nothing to Leylin. He was planning to move out after the banquet, giving the pirates their orders and settling matters regarding the trade.

Of course, he had to ease the tension in his family’s relationship

with Viscount Tim, handing over the prisoner and signing an agreement.

.....

Thump! A crisp slap landed on a young man's face, making his fair skin swell into a bruise.

“Gods, how could I have gotten such a stupid child like you!”

A furious middle-aged man dressed in exquisite noble attire stood in front of the youth. Complex designs were sewn in with golden thread on the fringe of his clothing, fully in the elven style. Exotic rings laden with precious gems lined all ten of his fingers in varying colours, and a few of them emitted powerful magical light.

This was the person controlling the Baltic archipelago, the younger blood brother of the Dambrath King. It was Marquis Louis.

The king obviously was not stingy when it came to titles, bestowing a dukedom upon him, but Louis evidently thirsted for power. Hereditary land was something even the children of the King might not be able to obtain.

Marquis Louis was very satisfied with the kingdom's offshore development and the growing trade profits. The only thing that made him frown was that in this vast open sea, there was some land that belonged to small noble families, as well as a bunch of

disobedient and barbaric pirates that were a thorn in his side. Hence, when his useless son begged for some territory, Marquis Louis had agreed.

However, looking at Viscount Tim in front of him now, he couldn't help but feel resent for failing to meet his expectations. "You're a disgrace! You do things without following any kind of rules. Not only do you try to assassinate someone on the continent, you can't even take care of the sea! You even lost the Black Tigers..."

At this point, Marquis Louis felt a little sorry. While the deaths of those filthy despicable pirates didn't faze him regardless of numbers, a rank 10 fighter like Steve was still a capable underling. On top of that, his own group of bandit assassins had been lost.

"Also!" Marquis Louis' chest kept heaving up and down as he flung a letter at Tim's face. "Look. This came specially for us from Griffith. Not only did you gain no advantages at all, you even pushed the Faulen Family towards those hicks!"

Tim let the letter smack on his face, feeling the unceasing stinging pain that caused his eyes to be filled with fiery fury.

Viscount Tim looked extremely similar to Marquis Louis, though he was much younger and had a pair of long and narrow eyes. He was now bowing respectfully, "Father, please give me another chance! As long as you assign Boruj to me, I can definitely..."

"Scram!" What answered him was only a hysterical yell from the

Marquis.

The door slammed shut, and Tim gently caressed his swollen face. The stinging pain doubled the fury in his heart.

The surrounding maids and the like naturally did not dare provoke Tim, who was in this state. All of them fervently wanted to be ostriches so they could bury their heads in the carpet. However, another noble youth strolled in with a mocking expression.

“Haha... my beloved little brother, you seem to have met with some trouble!”

“Big brother!” Tim clutched his face, feeling dazed and awkward when looking at the new arrival. This was the marquis’ first son, born of his primary wife. Hee would one day take over the Baltic archipelago. Given that his mother was a noble as well, his status was much higher than that of Tim, who could only rely on the whims of the marquis.

“Oh my, are you injured? Quick, get a priest!” The young man shouted at the servant behind him, as if he was an elder brother caring for his younger brother. However, Tim could see the mockery deep inside his eyes...

“Damn it. Damn it!” Only when he’d walked out of the mansion did Tim’s expression darken. “I’ll never let the people who’ve humiliated me off. I swear on it!”

“And then there’s the Faulen Island, and that little noble called Leylin. I’ll definitely force you all to hell and have you repent there!” Tim’s expression was sinister, like a savage beast that was letting out howls of pain.

.....

Leylin naturally knew nothing of this, but he could somewhat guess what was happening. However, his attention was now focused on other matters.

The place that Leylin had chosen to hide away in was at the other end of the Faulen Island. Since they hadn’t occupied this place for a long while, they didn’t have as many farmers and slaves as they’d need to occupy the whole island. Leylin chose this area because there were few people, and also because he favoured the lowlying shoal nearby. Such a level terrain was very rare on the Faulen Island, and enough for Leylin to do a great many things.

Up till now, Leylin had only built a few wooden plank houses nearby, as if preparing to go into training. He was kept updated on his family through Jacob.

“The prisoner was handed over, but Tim refused to sign an agreement?” Leylin stared at the coastline in the distance, his eyes flashing.

“Yes, young master!” Jacob stood behind Leylin, looking humble and respectful. After the few battles before, he was completely subservient to Leylin, and his loyalty could even be comprable to

Baron Jonas’.

Staring at the blue surface of the sea for a long while, Leylin suddenly laughed and spoke slowly, “Seems like he’s unreconciled to this.”

“That’s for sure. However, he hinted that there would be no attacks against our family for now. The Baron has also agreed.”

“It’s just temporary peace. His plans were disrupted, so he needs to reorganise everything. We need to amass some strength here.” Leylin could already tell what this was. It was no peace, just a temporary armistice. Once they reorganised, they would definitely attack the family once again.

Of course, Leylin did not mind this, what he needed right now was time.

“How’s the preparations on the slaves we need, the coarse sugar and the fishing boats?” Leylin enquired. This was the preparation for the sugar and fish floss trade that he had brought up with the baron earlier.

“I’ve already found a merchant in the port, and he’s willing to give us a channel for the slaves and sugar. As for the fishermen and fishing boats, an announcement has been pasted on the territory; commoners who come willingly will get a discount from taxes...” Jacob reported deferentially.

“Good. Don’t worry about the finances. Steve’s little treasury should somewhat be enough for the initial investment. Father has already to let me use everything...” Before handing the slave over, Leylin had naturally squeezed out all the value that Steve had left and obtained his precious wealth.

He’d also learned of the locations that had treasured buried in them. Pirates usually used gold which was a stable currency, and the habit of hiding it on barren islands.

It all added up to around a thousand gold coins, which was enough early money. There would be more money required near the end, but Leylin had already prepared Isabel and the pirates for that.

“Slave trade? I’ll need slaves that are proficient at carpentry and masonry. I don’t mind if they’re pricy...” The Dambrath Kingdom was expanding into the seas, and numerous barren archipelagos were found.

There were many natives, tropical forests, minerals, primordial creatures on the islands. Of course, there were also many diseases and death. As the commoners of the continent rarely agreed to follow their master and find new land, slaves were essential if one wanted to completely develop an island.

Marquis Louis of the Baltic archipelago was the one with the most profits from the trade. He had a tremendous supply chain that had deals with pirates and its own slave hunting outfit.

Untrained slaves were naturally the lowest class, and could only be used in wrestling rings or as sacrifices to gods. Once they were tamed, natives would be worth twice as much, and if they could plow land or had skills with carpentry and masonry, the price would keep going up.

However, they were still the lowest of the low. High-grade slaves were actually Professionals, or gorgeous women who had gone through special training. Every one of them could be sold in the continent for an astronomical price!

Chapter 818 - Pirates

“Slave trade, hehe...” Leylin snickered. While Marquis Louis’ business was focused on the slave trade, Leylin wouldn’t believe that the Baltic archipelago wasn’t involved in the sugar trade and the like. At the most, they would be side businesses is all.

He knew very well that if he was successful in forming a supply chain with this, his profits would be massive! It would bring about a lot of envy and hatred, causing conflict with Marquis Louis.

However, even if he didn’t delve into these two very profitable businesses, the Faulen Island wasn’t going to be ignored anyway. What was the point of trying to get along with them?

As he was speaking to Jacob, a group of slaves were rushed along to the beach by his soldiers, accompanied by carriages of food and the like.

“Jacob, let’s go and take a look as well.” Leylin brought Jacob to the front of the group.

“Young master!” The soldiers bowed, and the slaves lowered their heads, peeking at their future master with humble eyes.

“Are these... the natives of the outer sea islands?” Leylin knew that most of the slaves traded in the outer seas were natives. In fact, the higher grade ones were picked out and sent back to the mainland. Transporting slaves from the mainland to the outer seas was expensive, and slave traders would be satisfied if they didn’t

make a loss with such a thing.

The natives here were very short, coming up to Leylin's shoulder at the tallest. Most did not have any clothing, revealing their thin limbs and tanned skin. It reminded Leylin of chimps.

“Young master, there are a total of twenty slaves. With three of them being carpenters and another two stonemasons, it comes up to a total of 321 gold coins...” In reality, the price of these stonemasons and carpenters probably took up more than half of the total price.

“Mm...” Leylin nodded. Even this slight amount had caused him to spend a portion of his recent profits. Relying on slaves in order to build up the business he was thinking of was a pipe dream, Leylin wouldn't put his hopes on it.

“Your mission is to build a camp for me here. Of course, fences are necessary as well.” Leylin naturally did not understand the language of the natives, but that was no issue for wizards. Comprehend Languages could solve that. While these low-ranked spells could not analyse the languages of demons, the heavens, and all sorts of highly ranked languages of law, it would be more than enough for these natives.

After hearing Leylin's words, the group of slaves began to get restless.

“Quiet!” Leylin flicked his finger, and a ray of lightning shot out.

Pila! As if something huge had happened, many of the natives crouched down or even knelt after the violent streak of lightning passed.

Rank 0 spell: Lightning Lure!

“As you can see, I am a wizard that possesses immense strength. These fully equipped soldiers will continue to monitor you, so don’t even think about escaping or you’ll all be hanged. On the other hand, if you’re hardworking and complete your task in time, I’ll give you a reward, and even dismiss you from slavery.” Leylin’s hands glinted with sparks, making him look like a god in the eyes of the slaves.

In reality, wizards had always been rare existences in the World of Gods; there likely weren’t many even serving under Marquis Louis. This abnormal strength was the best way to terrorise these natives, having them believe he was a spirit of the elements or worship him like a god.

At this moment, there was a disturbance amongst the slaves. One of them who looked rather old crawled to Leylin’s feet, kissing the ground. “Powerful being who grasps the power of lightning, Nunooker is willing to listen to your teachings and obey your commands!”

“Very good! Nunooker, you shall lead these slaves from now.” They’d already been tamed by the trader’s leather whips, so Leylin could understand this situation. Whatever it was, the first ones to surrender their loyalty to him would be rewarded.

Nunooker was elated and he kowtowed again and again, “Esteemed master, Nunooker will definitely manage your assets well.”

“Mm... Tell them that those who are diligent will have enough black bread and fish soup.” After taking care of these matters, Leylin retreated to his own room. He just had to give the slaves a general idea, they would do the rest. The remaining bit would be left to Jacob to handle.

The first thing the frenzied slaves built were a few simple and crude houses. These would be their temporary residences as they built to the plans that were created by Leylin, making good use of every inch of land here.

Night fell. Having stuffed themselves with black bread, mushy fish meat and seaweed soup, the slaves slumbered deeply. In their eyes, someone like Leylin who possessed extraordinary strength yet was benevolent enough to let them eat well was a good master that was hard to come by.

A few soldiers patrolled next to the slaves’ accommodations, swapping out from time to time. While it wasn’t likely that the slaves would escape, Jacob had still arranged this.

In the deep, quiet night, the soldiers huddled around a bonfire. They looked listless, their eyelids about to fall shut at any moment. None of them noticed that their young master had left.

Fly! Leylin's body soared into the air, flying at a speed of 60 feet a second. He quickly left the vicinity of the camp.

"I can finally fly, but it's so slow!" Having grasped rank 3 spells, Leylin now had the ability to fly again, but the speed was not enough to please him.

In reality, wizards that could fly not only possessed the ability to quickly leave the battlefield in dire situations, but also to turn into death gods in the skies. Since most troops lacked the ability to fend off aerial strikes, wizards could hover in the air and cast spells from above like a nightmare!

Under the bright white moonlight, the surface of the sea was clear and gleaming, having a cold aura. The deep sea was filled with dangers, and numerous sea monsters began foraging for food in the night.

A black pirate ship was still, anchored on the surface of the sea. A swordswoman with a black longsword was standing on the deck, clad in skintight armour as if in wait for something.

Whoosh! A dark shadow slowly appeared by the horizon, and then turned into a human figure.

"Cousin Isabel, Robin Hood!" Leylin landed on the deck and acknowledged the two.

"Kid, why are you only just getting here!" Isabel whined, though

there was no trace of discontent in her expression.

“Young master!” Compared to her, Robin Hood was more respectful. After all, a wizard that could fly had immense destructive power when above the sea. Robin Hood knew this very well.

Most of the times, such wizards could send their opponents on their way before the ships could even line up with each other for battle.

“Call all sailors to deck!” Leylin commanded. Followed by a disturbance, numerous sailors gathered together. Amongst them were guards originally from the Faulen Family, although most of them were Black Tigers.

Now, however, all that was left in their eyes was fear, and their numbers seemed to have lessened. Leylin scanned the area, and Isabel lowered her head with burning cheeks. Robin Hood stood out, “Young master, in order to tame the pirates, we had no choice but to kill a few people to set a precedent...”

‘That’s probably not all...’ Leylin glanced at Isabel but did not pursue this further. All he needed was for these pirates to be obedient anyway.

Leylin’s eyes scanned the crowd. He then announced, “I have gathered you now because I’m planning to establish a private raiding fleet!”

It seemed like these people had already had their suspicions. They accepted the truth calmly, and the eyes of Robin Hood and a few others even flushed red with desire.

There were few truly good men who accompanied Baron Jonas to the barren island as he developed the territory. His companions had likely done all sorts of things in their free time, including playing at piracy. They might even have had the baron's tacit approval and support/

Leylin made plans for the family of those who had been guards to move to his camp. This would allow him to care for them, and control the spread of the news. While it was impossible to hide this for long from the baron, things would have all been done by then and he could do very little to interfere.

As for the pirate slaves, loyalty, justice and things like that didn't compare to money for them. As long as Leylin achieved victory after victory as he led them to gain wealth, they wouldn't mind even if their leader was a demon!

Of course, his subordinates now were a standard mob, and Leylin urgently needed a victory to stimulate them.

'On top of that, I need to maintain my reputation, and I'll need to disguise this Black Tiger ship. At the very least, I'll need some remodeling...' Leylin stamped the deck under his feet.

"Don't call me young master in the future. Call me Captain or Sire, is that understood?" he commanded. While it sounded

dreadful for a noble to partake in piracy himself, it was nothing new. However, he still needed to maintain a reputation. He couldn't do such things openly.

If Leylin were to be killed during a raid, the baron could not take revenge openly, and at most, do something in private.

“Yes, Captain!” Robin Hood quickly reacted.

“Good! Weigh the anchor! Set the sail! Let us plunder everything!”

Chapter 819 - Merfolk Pirates

A pirate ship drifted quietly in the pitch black of the night. A crimson skeletal flag fluttered in the wind, holding an aura of death.

Within the captain's room, the rocking hull did not affect Leylin the least. He was now on the upper levels with Isabel, Robin Hood and a few others, discussing their current target.

“We have over fifty sailors, but their quality is...” Robin Hood shook his head, evidently not thinking well of the sailors that had recently pledged their allegiance.

This was the truth anyway. Without the threat of death, they would not have submitted so quickly. However, having them show their loyalty was practically a joke. If there was a chance, they would definitely betray Leylin and escape without hesitation, even plunge a knife into his and the others' hearts.

“I know this very well, but loyalty can't be developed in just a day or two. Time will also help us phase out the people who intend to disobey...” Leylin's voice was very calm yet held an exceptional callousness. Isabel and Robin Hood felt like they could see the near future of the many pirates, and their executions by Leylin for all sorts of reasons.

“I'm planning to develop a base to produce fish floss on Faulen Island. We'll need a lot of money and slaves for it, and it's too much to handle if we depend on our territory alone. We need to get

this done, by hook or by crook.” Leylin stuck a dagger at a point on the map.

The primitive method of the accumulation of wealth was a drawn-out process. If one wanted to speed it up, there would definitely be blood and sin involved. Leylin did not have the skills to slowly guide an industry. He would only go on raid after raid to quickly build up a production line. Marquis Louis hadn’t given him much time, and he was running out.

Leylin never believed in random outside protection, believing that it would only bring about tragedy to entrust his life to someone else. Hence, he would rather take some risks to increase his strength, and expanding his trade profits was just one part of it. After this was done, he’d launch a series of attacks to set his opponents back in the region.

While Isabel and Robin Hood were unaware of Leylin’s thoughts, the murderous aura that he emanated caused them to involuntarily shiver.

“This is... the Half-Merfolk Island!” Robin Hood was the first to recognise the name of the island that Leylin had his eyes on, and he gasped, “There’s a famed group called the Merfolk Pirates occupying the place!”

“A group that Marquis Louis controls,” Leylin added coldly. How could he not have pried open Steve’s lips for such information? The man had been the captain of the Black Tigers, after all.

It was undeniable that a rank 10 fighter had a stronger will, but he was only able to hold on for half an hour longer than the assassin from before.

‘Hehe... He’s but a cripple in body and mind now. Even if Marquis Louis heals him, he’ll have a headache over this!’ Leylin snickered inside. If there were grades for torture and interrogation, he would definitely be a grandmaster.

Having gone through his hands, Steve had completely broken down. Perhaps even if the highest-ranked priest cast Regenerate and other spells on him, it would be difficult for him to return to his previous state.

Leylin suspected that Louis’ side would just kill Steve right away, it wasn’t worth inviting a high-ranked priest to cast divine spells. Even if many priests cast divine spells to heal others for a fee, it was very expensive to invite a high-ranked one. Even the sale of a rank 10 fighter couldn’t cover such a cost.

“The outer seas right now are just being discovered and developed. There’s no order here, only chaos...” Leylin’s palm caressed the map on the table, covering a large area, “Numerous adventurers, nobles and pirates rush to this place, but they can’t even get to developing 10% of the islands. Just 10% alone signifies an astonishing amount of profit and wealth!

“Our final goal is to subdue or eliminate all the pirates in this region, making us the undisputed kings of this dark world. Let all those of other flags end up struck down to the bottom of the sea!” Leylin’s voice was low, but these calm words seemed to be filled

with an allure that caused Robin Hood's breathing to grow rough.

In some areas, Leylin was even better than a devil at persuasion and negotiation. The promise of a beautiful future seemed to have moved the first mate.

"We have a huge advantage here, compared to those regions where the power struggle is complicated. There are no extremely powerful organisations to hinder us, only our greatest enemy in Marquis Louis." Leylin smirked.

Marquis Louis had control over the Baltic archipelago and practically over 60% of the new trade in this region. Hence, he'd become the rule setter here, and his profits were unimaginable to most.

Leylin's goal was to eliminate him and become the boss! The smart followed the rules, while the wise created them themselves. Leylin was going to completely destroy Louis, and make his own laws.

To attack Louis, it was necessary to first eliminate his subordinates and the pirates he commanded.

"Do you still have anything against my decision?" Leylin glanced at Robin. As for his cousin? As long as this had anything to do with Louis' family, she was likely eager to join.

"No, Captain! I obey your every command!" Robin Hood

immediately bowed, pledging himself with a serious expression.

“Good! There are only three large pirate organisations in this region, the Black Skeletons, Tigersharks, and Barbarians. Once we annex the Merfolk Pirates, we’ll be somewhat comparable to them.” What Leylin did not make clear was that the two of these three pirate organisations were linked in countless ways with Marquis Louis, and the Marquis might even be the one in control from the shadows.

If any of them had been sent to attack Leylin’s family, his only choice would have been to escape with Mistress Sarah. However, Louis had evidently underestimated Leylin’s side. That was why Leylin had managed to seize such an opportunity. Things would not be as easy the next time.

“Black Tigers, Merfolk, Black Skeletons and Tigersharks. These look like all of the pirates that Louis’ family has control over...” Leylin’s eyes glinted, ‘If two of them are taken care of at one go, I’m sure he’ll have a spectacular expression on his face!’

Robin Hood was a very good navigator, and after Leylin sent down the order he immediately used the stars to determine the location of the ship. He altered the shipping route so that they headed towards the Half-Merfolk Island.

The Black Tiger gradually left the shallow seas in the tranquil night, heading for the more mysterious and treacherous deep waters.

‘It’ll take a day or two of travel to get to Half-Merfolk Island...’ Leylin’s eyes twinkled. With the help from the A.I. Chip, his calculative abilities still far surpassed his first mate and navigator even without a moving scale or any tools.

Just when Leylin was about to blow out the lights, a disturbance was heard. There were even sounds of weapons clashing, causing Leylin to frown.

“What happened?” Leylin furrowed his brows, putting on a coat and heading out. Isabel walked over from the room next to his.

When they got outside, the yells and curses grew even clearer.

“The sailors are rebelling?” Leylin indifferently walked with Isabel to the deck.

Many of the prisoners stood together on deck, holding machetes and all sorts of weapons. They had forced Robin Hood and a few soldiers into a corner.

Compared to the thirty to forty people here, Robin Hood’s few subordinates seemed lonely and weak.

“How senseless!” Leylin flicked a finger, and a few pirates that were in the way turned into ice statues. The rest of the pirates moved away in fear, allowing Isabel and him to walk all the way to the deck.

“My apologies, young master! After hearing that we’re going towards the outer seas tonight, the sailors all began to rebel!” Robin Hood’s forehead was beaded with sweat as he explained to Leylin.

Many dangerous sea monsters liked to forage in the night, and unless they were exceptionally powerful fleets, nobody dared to head towards the deep seas now.

On top of that, these pirate captives weren’t all that obedient from the start, and were full of rebellious spirit. They were also a majority, which meant that it wasn’t unexpected for them to rise in revolt, especially with people deliberately stirring up the situation.

“Seems like Isabel and Robin Hood listening isn’t enough to control them...” Leylin sighed from the bottom of his heart, and then walked ahead, “Put down your weapons, or you’ll regret it. When it comes to the outer seas, I can ensure that your safety is guaranteed.”

“Don’t believe him! This son of a bitch and the woman from before just want us to die!” Just when the pirates were hesitant, a voice sounded from amongst the crowd.

“Come here!” Leylin’s eyes narrowed, and the mooring ropes placed at the ship’s railing seemed to gain lives of their own. They began to wave around, charging into the pirates like a python as they wrapped around one with triangular eyes, pulling him out.

“Vulgar maggot, did you think I can’t do anything against you if you hide in the shadows?”

With a flick of Leylin’s finger, a boiling hot fireball rushed out! It rumbled as it hit the bound pirate, lighting him up like a torch with sparks flying everywhere. Miserable cries sounded out, causing many pirates to retreat with fear on their faces.

“A wizard! It’s a wizard!” The pirates exclaimed. Most of the pirates had melee professions. True tall, rich, and cool wizards were a rare sight even amongst huge pirate groups.

Chapter 820 - Smash

Wizards were often more intimidatingly powerful than high-ranking fighters, knights and other such Professionals.

“I’ll count to three, and if you don’t put down your arms and kneel in surrender, you’ll follow his example!” With a tug of the rope, the charred remains were immediately scattered into the ocean. This intimidating strength immediately made many pirates think of retreating.

It was a pity that this was the ocean, and they were surrounded by water as far as the eye could see. Even if they wanted to run, they had nowhere to go.

“One.” Leylin’s face twitched as he announced without any hesitation.

“Two.” Two rays of ice flew out, turning the fleeing pirates into ice sculptures.

“Three!” Leylin’s eyes were filled with a heavy killing intent.

These terrifying eyes finally led to the collapse of the pirates. They abandoned their weapons one by one, and knelt on the floor while weeping bitterly.

“Robin Hood, tie them all up!” Leylin rubbed his hands together. After all, he could not possibly kill all of these captive pirates. If he

did, who would sail the ship?

In this world, a captain could only fight to the death in the face of mass mutiny. However, powerful people like him could put down their entire crew with a hand tied behind their back.

“As you command, Captain!” Although this was not the first time they had seen the young master’s power, the soldiers’ eyes were still filled with respect.

Given that those pirates didn’t dare to rebel, the soldiers on the deck could easily control them. Even if there were troubles on the ship, Isabel would resolve them before Leylin could even grow impatient.

Isabel would’ve taken care of the situation this time even if Leylin hadn’t. It was just that the situation would have ended up with many pointless deaths.

In the end, all of the captives who had taken part in the rebellion had been tied together and gathered on the deck. The soldiers and the rescued pirates who had not taken part in the rebellion erected several enormous wooden crucifixes there.

Leylin peacefully stood in front of the pirates, but he did not say a single word. However, this made the pirates begin to tremble in fear. Leylin was determined to go through with this purge, and did not have any intention of letting them off.

“Find me the leader of the rebellion!” With Leylin’s command, as well as the pirates identifying each other themselves, several wild and untameable ones were pushed out from the crowd.

“There’s only four or five? This is far too few!” Leylin shook his head, “Robin Hood, pick one out of every five to kill!”

Soon after, the remaining pirates huddled together in alarm. Robin Hood counted here and there, and every fifth pirate was immediately dragged out by the soldiers. This repeated until 5 poor devils had been chosen.

This was a method from Leylin’s previous life, called decimation. It was a way of investigation, used similarly to what he had employed to execute criminals.

“This is your sentence.” Leylin waved his hand, and his subordinates quickly swarmed around the criminals, binding them on top of the crucifixes.

Thud! Thud! Thud! The other pirates were alarmed by the sounds as several nails were hammered into the offenders, even if they avoided the vitals. Drops of blood ran down the nails.

“Bastard! I won’t let you off!” “Even if I die, I’ll drag you to hell with me!” “My lord, please spare us! Please spare us!”

Blood-curdling screams rang out, intermixed with curses and pleas.

“Aren’t you lively? I hope you can be like that tomorrow too!” Leylin smiled faintly.

This method of crucifixion was very inhumane. The targets inched closer and closer to death as they gradually bled out. The sort of fear it induced could lead to a nervous breakdown in normal people.

These physically strong people could perhaps stay alive until the second day. However, that was of no use; it only meant more insane pain and torment.

The violent sunlight of the sea would drain them of every drop of moisture in their body, until they were mummified. And in the end, they could only chose between bleeding to death, dying from sunburn, or dying of thirst.

Many of the captives who thought of this scene were so frightened that they couldn’t help but wet themselves. They didn’t even dare to meet Leylin’s eyes; the smell of urine spread.

“As for the rest of you, I’ll be gracious and show you mercy. You will only receive ten lashes. Now all of you, clean the decks immediately! If I see even a single speck of dust tomorrow, you’ll have to lick it clean! Do you all understand?” Leylin shouted.

When grace was absent, the fear of death was an effective deterrent. Of course, the prerequisite was that one needed enough power. Still, who amongst Leylin’s subordinates could surpass him

in strength?

Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Leather whips specially soaked in seawater were used to punish these pirates. On one hand, the salt in the water would prevent the wounds festering, but on the other hand, the pain would be even more severe.

These lucky pirates did not dare to grumble, and they began to clean up the deck even more quickly. Those who were currently crucified were deeply reminded of their betrayal.

‘Fear me, respect me, hate me!’ Leylin stood at the ship’s bow like a tall mountain, filled with a deep and immeasurable strength.

‘The hate and resentment of an ordinary person seem to result in some additional spiritual force and soul force emanating from them.’ Leylin shut his eyes, sensing the respect from the pirates on the ship.

‘What a pity... If this number was multiplied by a thousand times, and continued for over 10 years, it would be possible for me to comprehend divinity, and become a divine being.’ The power of fear was a standard tool for demons and devils. It was very effective, a god only needed to absorb the energy of faith arising from mortal fear. His subordinates’ shifting moods had allowed Leylin to touch on a path to divinity.

‘Pity. This method is completely undesirable, not to mention what the churches would do once they discover me trying to spread fear to become a god. Perhaps their first course of action

would be to come and destroy me...' It was very foolish to peep into the realm of gods without even becoming a Legend.

"Cousin, aren't you going to rest?" Isabel arrived at Leylin's side at this moment. She was the only one who would dare to do so.

At the same time, Leylin noticed that Isabel was looking at these condemned convicts with eyes filled with regret. Naturally, she wasn't regretting their deaths, but she felt it was a great pity to lose so many sacrificial offerings.

"My dear cousin!" Leylin began as he watched Isabel, "You shouldn't just act according to the other party's wishes when dealing with an abnormal life form. Sometimes you need to negotiate, and even refuse... Perhaps this can help you."

Leylin took out a black notebook and passed it over to her.

"Rules of Negotiation with Abnormal Entities-Demon Edition!" Isabel let out a low cry. This book contained knowledge about demons, and to the churches it was a standard demonic item.

"This is part of my teacher's collection, I copied it out using magic. Perhaps it can help you, don't let anyone else see it," Leylin smiled faintly. In fact, this was from Beelzebub's memories. After all, he was the commander of the devils' army, and he had a deep understanding of those demons that were his enemies.

At the same time, devils were also the greatest experts in deceit,

threats, and modifying contracts. With Beelzebub's knowledge, the least it could do was to ensure that she wouldn't suffer too big a loss when making deals in hell or the abyss.

“Even if you sell your soul, make sure it fetches a good price. Don't be swayed by a few words and offer it up without thinking it through. That would simply be too foolish...”

“T-Thank you!” Isabel hugged the black notebook close, as if it was her entire world.

“Also, it seems like we won't get any rest tonight...” Leylin waved his hand and said to Isabel, “Be careful!”

“What should I be careful of... AH!” Isabel was rather doubtful, but she immediately felt a huge jolt. As she was still firmly holding onto the notebook with both hands, she almost fell to the deck.

At this moment, a pair of powerful hands held her up steadily.

“If you feel that the storm is too much, go back to your room and leave this place to me,” Leylin's words were filled with self-confidence, and it seemed to give her a great sense of security. Isabel agreed in a rather foolish manner, and really walked back to her cabin.

Yet after a short moment, she'd changed into her leather armour and grabbed her longsword, rushing back out.

“I’ve put away the thing you gave me!” Isabel’s face was flushed as she flusteredly explained.

At this moment, Robin Hood’s voice rang out, sounding completely exasperated, “Tigershark! It’s a Mutant Tigershark!”

The expressions of the people on the ship immediately changed greatly. The Mutant Tigershark was a type of deep sea monster. It possessed an enormous body larger than ordinary whales, and it had a savage nature. It particularly enjoyed hunting at night.

This Tigershark’s body could easily flip over the Black Tiger. Such a thing was exactly why these pirates were so afraid of sailing at night.

“What are you panicking for? Calm down now!” Leylin’s voice spread immediately, charged with a pacifying force. In just a moment all of the alarmed pirates calmed down.

The ship’s hull was tilted to an alarming degree, and it was tipping further. It was like a powerful monster was shaking the bottom of the ocean. At this moment, everyone on the ship could only pin their hopes on Leylin, the wizard.

Isabel stood the closest to Leylin, and she discovered that he had a strangely excited expression on his face.

“Finally! I’ve been waiting for this. This opponent is mine, don’t interfere!” Without even waiting for her to respond, Leylin

immediately jumped off the deck of the ship.

Chapter 821 - Level 1 Magic Weave

The bitterly cold seawater seemed to chill one to the bone as the mountainous black figure suddenly appeared in front of Leylin.

As the A.I. Chip finished scanning, the Tigershark's stats appeared in front of him.

[Mutant Tigershark, Estimated Stats: Strength: 7+, Agility: 2-4, Vitality: 13+, Spirit: 3. Abilities: 1. Sharkskin: A Tigershark's skin has a slight resistance to physical and magical attacks. 2. Lesser Regeneration: Slight ability to restore a certain amount of life force.]

“Not bad, not bad. With this physique and abundant energy, it's worthy of being called a deep sea creature...” Leylin's eyes seemed to glow a crimson red.

Aquatic Swiftiness! A glowing enchantment draped itself over Leylin's body, and he obtained greater speed in the water. It made him as nimble in the water as he was on land.

An enormous sound wave spread out, causing massive vibrations. The forcefield around Leylin's Mage Armour creaked, as if unable to bear the attack.

The Tigershark seemed to care very little for the insignificantly tiny Leylin, and it occasionally used its giant dorsal fin to smash

against the Black Tiger. It looked like it wanted to flip the ship over.

In this situation, Leylin immediately arrived at the back of the Tigershark, and climbed up the coarse surface of the shark's skin.

“According to the perspective drawing on the map, it should be here!”

Numerous shadowy daggers suddenly appeared from Leylin's hand as he shouted, “Cloud of Daggers! Ice Knife!”

Shlook! The ice daggers plunged into the Mutant Tigershark's back, making it suddenly swing its entire body around. Copious amounts of fresh blood poured out from its wounds. Its sharkskin seemed like paper under Leylin's attack.

Bang! Bang! Bang! At this moment, the Mutant Tigershark's body seemed to become a burden to it. As it was so enormous, it could only violently shake its body and hope that this would throw Leylin far away. It was to the point where the Tigershark once slammed the part of its body where Leylin was against the ship. It seemed to want to crush Leylin to death.

However, long before that enormous collision could occur, a glowing dagger that was the colour of blood appeared in Leylin's hand, the Devilblood Dagger.

“Its artery is here!” Leylin's eyes seemed to glow, and he stabbed

down.

The Mutant Tigershark bellowed with rage, and its movements momentarily stilled. Afterwards, it began to sway and twitch even more violently than before, which made Leylin feel like he was riding a rollercoaster.

Leylin used Adhesion, and was finally able to stick firmly to the Tigershark's body like a lizard. He felt a strong heat flowing from his palm, the dagger in it like a greedy devil that was relentlessly absorbing the Tigershark's life force.

Accompanying the absorption of life force by the Devilblood Dagger, the Mutant Tigershark's back began to atrophy first, exposing dried-up and eroded flesh. Following this, the corrosion began to spread. The Tigershark's death throes were extremely violent. It gave up on the Black Tiger, and began to travel at a great speed into the sea, swimming deeper without stopping.

However, Leylin remained unmoved by the situation. The Tigershark had such a powerful body that the boost he gained from it was very considerable. He listened to the A.I. Chip's constant prompts and saw his own slowly increasing stats, clearly feeling the surging life force of the creature constantly being drained. The Devilblood Dagger converted its life force into another form of energy, and transferred it into his body.

Finally, the Mutant Tigershark had one last spurt of movement before it stilled. Its malevolent eyes lost their lustre, and it slowly fell towards the seabed like a sunken ship, dead.

It did not end just like that. The Tigershark's originally glistening skin had completely dried up, now looking like ancient tree bark even as it had shrunk to half its former size. If it was dissected, then it would be possible to see that the Tigershark's internal organs had also lost all their life force and had become a pile of waste.

[Beep! Host has killed the Mutant Tigershark, and received a boost from the Devilblood Dagger. Strength has increased by 0.1, vitality increased by 0.3, spiritual force increased by 0.009.]

At this moment, the A.I. Chip sent over its final summary, and Leylin noticed his updated stats.

[Leylin Faulen. Race: Human, Rank 7 Wizard. Strength: 2.6, Agility: 2, Vitality: 4, Spirit: 7. Status: Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite. Spell Slots: Rank 3(1), Rank 2(3), Rank 1(4), Rank 0(???)]

‘This Tigershark seems to be much stronger than the assassin from before. However it only raised my stats a little, and the most it did was to raise my vitality by 0.3. My spiritual force doesn't seem to have changed...’ Leylin's expression was a little gloomy.

As his stats increased, and every stat broke through 10, the Devilblood Dagger would grow less useful. He would eventually grow completely immune to its effects.

‘However, the open sea is full of resources. Many drops of water make up an ocean, so it should be enough to let me advance to become a rank 9 or even rank 10 wizard...’ Leylin’s expression clouded over.

This was one of his plans. The Devilblood Dagger’s flesh devouring ability meant that outside of high-level Professionals, the only place that had enough flesh to feed it was the open sea. The bodies of deep sea creatures were terrifyingly massive, and organisms full of life force could be found everywhere.

Naturally, these monsters all had their own intelligence and faith, so slaughtering them as one pleased would damage one’s reputation and could even attract an intervention from the gods of other races. It could even draw the attention of druids, who were all lunatics and naturally hostile towards those who destroyed nature.

Now however, the blood on the Black Tiger had attracted the spontaneous attack of many monsters so it wasn’t possible to give them preferential treatment.

One could imagine that in the near future, more than one sea monster would be attracted by Leylin, and all of them would become an unending stream of life force, pushing forward his advancement.

Leylin's body split open the surface of the sea with a loud splash, and he landed on the deck.

"Cousin Leylin! Are you alright?" Isabel looked at him worry in her eyes.

"I'm alright, continue sailing!" Leylin waved his hand, and all the sailors who heard his command suddenly became sluggish.

He was alright, but it was clear that the terrifyingly powerful monster from earlier was still howling unstoppably on the seabed. They could guess at the powerful battle that occurred after Leylin jumped into the sea, while standing on the deck.

It appeared like their captain could kill even a Mutant Tigershark!

Very quickly, even the most frightening pirates looked at Leylin with eyes filled with respect. They only admired the strong, and now that Leylin had revealed his savage nature, he had also exposed his own powerful abilities.

This carrot-and-stick method was enough to subdue these old pirates. The subconscious actions of theirs made Leylin smile at the scene that would occur many, many more times in the future.

After the battle of Half-Merfolk Island, he would possibly possess an army of pirates that only listened to him.

.....

Under the sunny and cloudless sky, Robin Hood's eyes were filled with unconcealed respect as he reported from behind Leylin. "Captain, we will arrive at Half-Merfolk Island in half an hourglass' time!"

"I know, pass on the order. Prepare for battle!" Leylin looked out towards the distance, and seemed to be rather distracted. Yet Robin Hood did not notice that, and immediately began to carry out his order.

In reality, Leylin was experiencing an enormous change at this very moment. Ever since he had fought that Mutant Tigershark, he had also attacked various other sea monsters. Under Leylin's Devilblood Dagger, they all became gifts of experience which helped his stats steadily rise.

The most important thing was that after the boost from this power, the A.I. Chip's rate of analysing the Weave had increased greatly. Many rank 0 and 1 symbols glowed in front of Leylin, as if forming the mystery of the universe in their array.

Only when he heard a sharp and clear ring did Leylin snap out of his trance-like state. The A.I. Chip displayed its newest progress in front of him.

[Beep! Rank 1 Weave has been fully analysed! Progress is

100%]

[Weave Analysis Progress: Rank 0 Weave: 100%. Rank 1 Weave: 100%. Rank 2 Weave: 13.61%. Rank 3 Weave: 0.45%]

The higher the rank of the Weave, the harder it was to analyse it. This was especially true of the rank 3 Weave, the analysis of which hadn't even reached 1% yet. However, Leylin was already very satisfied.

[Beep! Rank 1 Weave has been fully analysed. The host now has all rank 1 magic models, and spells will not be deleted. Host is exempt from forgetting magic!]

The A.I. Chip's prompts came incessantly.

Leylin now felt that a layer of the Weave had been uncovered, and many rank 1 spell models, from the most basic Alarm to the Endure Element spells and even frightening spells like the Necromancer's Ray of Enfeeblement were displayed before him.

After the breakthrough of the rank 1 Weave, not only did he was exempt from all the limitations of rank 1 spell models, he could directly use spiritual force to perform magic. It even gave him a lot

of authority within the Weave.

It could be said that the benefits brought about by the advancement were of greater help to him than advancing to a higher rank as a wizard, especially when he was on the verge of attacking Half-Merfolk Island.

Leylin couldn't help but glance over his stats:

[Leylin Faulen, Race: Human, Rank 7 Wizard, Strength: 3.5, Agility: 3, Vitality: 4.5, Spirit: 7.9, Status: Healthy. Innate skills: Sturdy, Erudite. Spell slots: Rank 3 (1), rank 2 (3), rank 1 (???), rank 0 (???)]

Day after day of sailing, as well as constantly attracting sea monsters, had made enormous contributions to his strength.

Chapter 822 - Dawn of War

‘My spiritual force has reached another bottleneck. I might be able to break through after this battle.’ A month had yet to pass since Leylin broke through to rank 7 as a wizard.

This frightening pace of advancement was something even your average genius wouldn’t be able to match. His speed was absolutely monstrous.

Naturally, Leylin could only advance so quickly because of the Devilblood Dagger’s work, and even more so because of his strong foundation. It was because of his foundation that he could control the explosive increase in his life force and stats. In his situation, Isabel would long since have gone insane or become a devil.

“There’s a fleet ahead!” The pirate in the loft called out suddenly.

“I see the flag of the Merfolk Pirates, it’s their battleship!” Leylin did not feel particularly alarmed by this news. This sort of sneak attack couldn’t be successful over and over again.

The Merfolk Pirates would have long made preparations around their lair, and it wouldn’t have been difficult for them to spot him.

“Call the sailors out, prepare for battle!” The most important thing about naval warfare was long-distance ranged attacks and boarding. Under Robin Hood’s roar, tens of pirates and sailors stood out, their hands suffused in the blue light of weapons slicked with poison.

The Black Tigers who went up against the Merfolk Pirates had a look of great apprehension in their eyes. Only the weapons in their hands and Leylin's presence could calm them down slightly.

"These pirates need to undergo a longer period of training..." Isabel and Robin Hood came to Leylin with worried expressions.

"Don't worry, the battleground is the best teacher. Death will help weed out the trash. After all, if they still lose to the enemy even with the weapons I provided, then I won't care even if they die," Leylin's expression was completely cool.

"This type of weapon..." Robin Hood raised up the longsword in his hand. The edge of the blade was suffused with a blue glow, which was clearly a powerful toxin. He had personally tested this poison, and discovered it had a powerful paralytic effect. Even a shark could not endure it for more than a few breaths.

'This sort of poisonous weapon could fetch a price of more than ten gold coins in the black market...' Robin Hood unconsciously licked his lips. He had a quiver of poison arrows on his back, which when combined with his archery skills gave him the confidence to challenge a rank 5 fighter.

'I didn't expect the boss to have mastered alchemy as well...' Robin Hood glanced at Leylin with eyes full of respect. Such an achievement made him feel even more fearful. If he ever offended his boss, he probably wouldn't even realise how he died.

In reality, those poisonous reagents were a result of Leylin's boredom. He was already a grandmaster in the field, and after familiarising himself with the flora and fauna of the World of Gods over a few years, his experience naturally translated into results.

The raw material of these poisonous reagents was the juice of the most commonly seen pike fish on the Faulen Island. No matter who looked at it, they wouldn't associate that fish with deadly poison.

Even cousin Isabel envied Leylin's poison, and although she did not apply it to her own longsword, she still asked him for a small bottle.

"Isabel, Faulen guards!" Leylin commanded.

"Boss!" This group of people were small in number, but they had the highest loyalty towards Leylin. Once they heard his command, they immediately assembled by his side.

"Pick up your weapons!" Once Leylin issued his command, the guards brought out their longswords. The icy blue glow they emitted filled many pirates with fear.

"Although I've already boosted their damage once, it's better to have more insurance," Leylin pointed his finger, and a shining spell entered Isabel's black longsword.

This was Enchant Item, a rank 1 spell which could boost weapon

damage as well as defence. Although Isabel had not soaked her own sword in poison, seeing her sword immersed in a layer of magical light caused a joyous expression to appear on her face.

After a weapon had been enchanted, even temporarily, its power far surpassed that of poisoned weapons. Of course, enchantments were more expensive as well.

However, Leylin's act did not stop there.

Enchant Item was cast again and again and again as Leylin added a layer of enchantment to the weapons of all his own guards.

“Cousin, will you have enough spells after this? Don't tell me you've used up all your spell slots to enchant weapons?” Isabel stood at the side as she watched the guards, and even the pirates, receive the same magical light to their swords. Her eyes were full of envy and she almost even drooled.

Enchanted equipment would increase an individual's battle strength by leaps and bounds. Imagine if you struck someone, and your opponent's weapon snapped in half, and even their armour would not be able to stop your sword. How would that make you feel?

With this support, those guards now had a lower chance of dying. This was Leylin's goal, as these talented people were his true capital and the core of his strength. Family was still family, and they would receive differential treatment right from the beginning. Leylin surveyed his surroundings and was very satisfied

with the result.

“Did you see that? Demonstrate your loyalty to me in the future, and you shall have whatever you want!” Leylin shouted. Paired with his earlier use of magic, his voice was full of persuasive power.

At this moment, a small fleet appeared in the waters. It was a group made up of a battleship as large as the Black Tiger and two smaller boats, advancing in a threatening manner as they surrounded Leylin’s ship.

One could even see numerous pirates on the decks, as well as a pirate flag of a merfolk skeleton on their flagpole.

“Welcome them on board. Prepare for a battle on the sea!” Robin Hood shouted. Many sailors could not help but firmly grasp their weapons, the only thing they could rely on to make themselves feel safe.

‘The Merfolk Pirates are close to the Black Tigers in strength. However, they have nearly 200 sailors, including merfolk, shark people, and even other marine tribes...’ Leylin’s keen eyes allowed him to see farther than others, distinguishing the characteristics of the opposing marine tribes. His eyes glowed with interest.

‘I wonder... What is the difference between the marine tribes here and the ones from the Magus World?’ Leylin knew that this question would soon be answered. Because after this battle, he would have an enormous number of test subjects to experiment

on.

Bang! As soon as both sides were within a mile of each other, the opposing battleship let out a massive explosive sound. An enormously long harpoon was shot out towards them.

Shua! The terrifyingly fast harpoon had immense kinetic energy, and only Leylin was able to see its orbit through the air.

Fresh blood flew into the air, and a great number of pained cries immediately rang out. The harpoon penetrated several of the less able pirates who didn't duck in time. It pierced through the Pirates, stringing them together [like an iced candy haw on a stick](#). It even pierced through the floor of the deck and embedded itself there.

Red hawthorn fruit covered in liquid sugary syrup, with a stick piercing through the middle of 6-7 fruits. Street snack

Fresh blood flowed from the harpoon, and the more tenacious pirates still managed to issue cries of pain as they attempted to struggle. This made the other pirates retreat, their eyes filled with fear.

‘These bastards! Luckily I never thought of depending on them!’ The dismal performance of the pirates made Leylin shake his head. He then winked at Isabel, and used a Flight spell to soar into the sky.

Once Leylin got closer, he could hear the commotion on the opposing ship. “Wizard! The enemy has a wizard!” “Prepare your

bows and arrows!”

Powerful spell casters had a strong reputation that spread throughout the continents of the World of Gods. Why a respected wizard would join the pirates and suddenly attack was something the Merfolk Pirates could not understand. However, the fear had already taken root, leaving them bewildered and open to attack.

The fluttering arrows soared into the sky, but lost their energy mid-air like kites with their strings cut. They swayed here and there as they fell.

At Leylin’s height, if they wanted to really threaten him, they had to have a Professional who used bows, such as a Ranger or an Archer. However, it was obvious that the opposing group would have a limited number of these talents. The few times they tried to attack him, Leylin easily dodged them.

Once a wizard could fearlessly shoot his spells from the air, calamity would begin.

Fireball! Gust!

A massive fireball flashed in Leylin’s hand, and immediately exploded on one of the smaller ships’ sails. Magic fuelled its flames, and the Gust spell caused it to spread. The entire ship went up in fire.

Splash! Splash! The sailors who had been set on fire jumped off

the ship one by one, and were struggling in the middle of the ocean.

By the time the other small pirate ship faced the same fate, some of the men on the main battleship had gone mad.

“Damn it! Where is this damn wizard from?” The Merfolk Pirates’ leader was a strong man. Only the two faint traces of scales on both sides of his cheeks hinted that this person had once won the blessing of a devil, and possessed the power of a demon.

Currently, the pirate captain looked at how half of his force had been destroyed, and almost went mad. He would never have thought that he would clash against such a mighty wizard. Seeing that the wizard was able to fly and skilfully cast spells in mid-air, he had to be at least rank 7. He could even be a powerful rank 8 or 9 wizard!

With this sort of strength, he could become a noble on the continent. So why was this wizard coming here especially to bother him?

Chapter 823 - Bloodsucker

‘I don’t really want the other two ships, but this main battleship is rather good!’ Leylin purposefully lifted the effects of the Flight spell, and landed on the Merfolk Pirates’ deck.

“What? This foolish wizard dared come here by himself?” The captain of the Merfolk Pirates was overjoyed, “Get up there! Kill him!”

Two odd-looking pirates, with the heads of a crab and a squid, swarmed around Leylin and surrounded him completely. Their eyes were filled with ferocity.

Puff! Puff! The air seemed to twist, and two sharp daggers which looked just like a pair of poisonous snakes appeared and bared their sharp teeth at Leylin.

“Mm! This Sneak of Shadows is comparable to Mankeh’s...” Leylin had a ferocious smile on his face, “What a shame that you squids alone aren’t enough!”

In a flash of blood-red light, the Devilblood Dagger appeared in Leylin’s hand. As he held the dagger, he seemed to transform into the image of a night elf, his every act and every move seeming to be filled with a unique beauty.

“Shadow Dance!” With the A.I Chip’s support, Leylin used a skill that could normally only be used by high-ranking rogues and assassins. The blood-red light turned into a whirlwind,

immediately dragging the two assassins into itself.

The dagger's lifesteal greatly surpassed that of a vampire. Once stabbed by it, the two assassins were instantly turned into corpses, falling to the floor.

Bang! Bang! Metal weapons clashed against each other loudly, and the mermen closest to Leylin fell to the ground. As traces of their blood-red energy was absorbed by Leylin's dagger, they completely lost all of their life force, to the point where their corpses would scatter into dust at the lightest touch.

"He's a devil! A demon from the abyss!" This horrifying scene scared all of the ferocious pirates so much that they wet themselves. All intelligent creatures feared the unknown. Although they could usually kill without even batting an eye, they had apparently never seen this sort of tragic manner of death before.

"As expected, personally harvesting lives myself is the most enjoyable experience..." Leylin's lips quirked up into a rather evil smile, "Bull's Strength! Cat's Grace!"

Two rays of magic light flickered, and after receiving the boost of strength and agility, Leylin seemed to become death incarnate, reaping the lives of all the pirates around him. While he was killing, countless rank 0 and rank 1 spells shot out from Leylin's hands without stopping.

The Devilblood Dagger was not some ordinary metal weapon. Of

course, it did not have any effect on a wizard's spellcasting, but without the Weave impeding him, Leylin's movement was even quicker and smoother.

“As expected! On of a shipful of pirates, all of them have close-ranged professions, and there's not a single Conjurer...” Leylin was like a tiger amongst a flock of sheep. His eyes swept across the entire ship, as if he was hunting for prey.

If anyone of the Conjurer profession came out to fight, even if they only had the Web or Grease spells they would become rather troublesome.

However it was a pity. The Merfolk Pirates were secretly controlled by Marquis Louis, and he wouldn't put a Sorcerer or other high-ranked Professional with a bunch of pirates. Perhaps only the three largest pirate groups would have a Sorcerer in their midst.

“Did you see that? Our boss has already destroyed two of their ships, and there's only one left. Get up there and kill them all!” Robin Hood lay on top of a railing, and after seeing Leylin's success in battle, he roared loudly from the back.

At this moment, the pirate prisoners also let out a wolf-like howl, “Kill them! Kill them!”

The pirates who previously completely lacked morale now exploded forth with 200% of their fighting spirit and hot-bloodedness, loudly roaring at the Merfolk Pirates as they clashed

in battle.

The battle between the ships would erupt at any moment, when they came side to side.

“We can’t continue like this! Fuck, where are these pirates from? They’re so strong and they even have a wizard supporting them, and they’re still coming here to cause me trouble?” The Merfolk Pirate captain looked as the sight of his underlings being killed one by one, and the Black Tiger pirate ship advancing quickly ahead. His expression grew even uglier.

Yet at this moment, the wizard was clearly advancing with thoughts of destroying the captain, and whatever ideas or hopes he had were all for naught. This captain understood very well that even if he chose to surrender, perhaps the normal pirates would end up alright, but he and his confidantes would absolutely be forced to walk the plank.

At this thought, his eyes gleamed ruthlessly. He tore off the cloak on his body, revealing stainless steel armour beneath.

“Make way! Archers, prepare!” As he was forced to an impasse, the captain prepared to personally enter the fray. After all, as the captain of the crew he was very strong.

“Battle skill— Charge!” The pirate captain was completely wrapped up in a dense layer of qi. He charged forwards like a battle tank.

“He should be a rank 10 warrior, and his armour and ring...” Leylin quickly retreated, his gleaming eyes making the pirate captain shiver.

At this moment, the A.I. Chip had already collected the captain’s stats and displayed them to Leylin. [Name Unknown, Sex: Male, Estimated stats, Strength: 11+, Agility: 5, Vitality: 8, Spirit: 3, Predicted Fighter Rank: 11. Evaluation: Dangerous! Armour and ring are radiating magic, deduced to be magic items!]

After his Charge skill, the pirate captain swung from his waist, and the broadsword in his hand began to rotate like a windmill. “Ha! Battle skill— Whirling Slash!”

Bang! Bang! Crack! The sword flew like the wind everywhere he went, slashing most of the deck open. Wooden splinters flew everywhere.

This battle skill was something the captain was very proud of, and something he had learnt very recently. He had to work hard under a Professional fighter’s guidance for three years before he had managed to gain their recognition and tutorship.

However, this was all worth it. After learning this skill, he had used its terrifying revolving strength to kill several warriors of a higher rank than him, and finally gained the treasured position of the captain of the Merfolk Pirates.

Needless to say, his opponent was only a wizard, and even if he had the abilities of a rogue, he could not beat a warrior of similar

rank to him.

The pirate captain's mouth split open into a wide grin. If the wizard was caught by Whirling Slash, then he could almost see his body being torn apart.

“You have a rather good battle skill there, it's a pity that you're too slow...”

Puff! The sound of a heavy hammer hitting leather rang out, and a layer of protection suddenly burst from the captain's armour, offsetting the dagger's attack trajectory. Even so, the tip of the blood-red dagger left a very deep mark on his chest.

Seeing that his armour had almost been cut through, the pirate captain's face was filled with triumph at his luck.

‘What a pity! If I hadn't used a rank 3 spell slot to memorise Flight, then one Dispel Magic could have broken through his defense just now and killed him.’ Leylin's figure hadn't stopped at all, and he charged once again through the group of pirates. Several severed heads were sent flying into the air, and fountains of blood gushed out.

Before it had the chance to touch the ground, the blood was absorbed by the dagger in Leylin's hand. All the small cuts to his body healed immediately, as if they had never been inflicted in the first place.

“This ability... You’re a vampire!” The pirate captain seemed to recall a rather unpleasant memory, which made him cry out in alarm. This ability to absorb life force and his quick regenerative ability, was very similar to that of the rumoured vampires.

Bang! A huge impact spread across the deck like a grade 8 earthquake.

Just when Leylin had single-handedly contained all the pirates, the Black Tiger smashed against the side of the ship. Many small boats hooked onto it, and pirates climbed the cables aboard. A great number of them waved their glowing blue weapons as they came on deck.

These weapons which had been soaked in Leylin’s poison did a great deal of damage to the Merfolk Pirates. Even the tiniest cut would paralyze them and drop them to the ground, to then be killed by their enemies.

The magic weapons that Leylin had enchanted, used by the guards, were even more formidable. Isabel took the lead like a Valkyrie, and many Merfolk Pirates were killed so quickly that they died in confusion.

“What? Thinking of escaping?” Leylin’s face was wreathed in smiles as he looked at the ugly expression on the pirate captain’s face.

“Ha! Battle skill— Blast Slash!” It was clear that this pirate

captain knew that unless he could thoroughly shake Leylin off his trail, he didn't have a single hope of escaping. After his expression changed, he charged forwards immediately, his broadsword shining like a blade of light.

Just as the captain was charging towards Leylin, the ring on his right hand suddenly emitted a beautiful burst of magical light.

“Swift Explosion!” The sudden blessing from the spell increased the captain's attack speed fivefold. If his enemy did not notice this, they were sure to regret it.

However, Leylin had long anticipated this. He only smiled at the pirate captain, and gave him a signal, “Grease!”

Clang! The deck immediately became impossibly slippery, and the expression of the charging captain changed. He completely lost his balance.

“I already know about all your trump cards. Under these circumstances, you only have one fate, and that is to peacefully walk the path of death...” Leylin seemed as graceful as a dancer as he began to step out, his elegant figure flying over to the Merfolk Pirate.

A severed head flew high up into the air, and soon after blood rushed out from his neck.

The Devilblood Dagger let out an icy-cold laughter after it had

feasted on the fresh blood, and its wings seemed to become even more true to life, as if the demon sealed within it had recovered.

Chapter 824 - Mermaid Island

Leylin put the Devilblood Dagger away. He sensed that he had absorbed an enormous amount of life force, and it had all been transformed into spiritual force. Having already reached the peak, this additional energy pushed him to a breakthrough.

[Beep! Host has gone through a battle. Devilblood Dagger has completed the energy conversion! Spirit +0.1]

[Host's spiritual force has reached 8, rank has increased. Host is now a rank 8 wizard.]

[Host has advanced to rank 8! Number of rank 3 spell slots increased by 1, number of rank 2 spell slots increased by 1.]

A few prompts jumped out all at once, and Leylin's mouth curved up into a wide smile in response.

Converting almost all of this Merfolk Pirate captain's flesh had given him an increase of only 0.1 in his Spirit stat. However, it helped him break through the threshold of a rank 8 wizard, something that many low-ranking wizards on the continent

couldn't even beg for.

‘However, it’s better not to let others know about this strange way of breaking through. Otherwise I will definitely become a public target...’ Leylin stood aside and watched the guards clear up the remnants of battle on the pirate ship.

In reality, after the Merfolk Pirates’ captain had died, the battle could be said to have been decided. Many Merfolk Pirates suffered a collapse in morale, and they either tried to escape from the ship or threw away their weapons and surrendered.

Leylin did not take action again after that, but he coldly watched Isabel and the others clear up the last of the pirates.

“This time, we don’t want prisoners. Archers get ready, kill all those pirates who jumped into the sea!” On hearing this cold command, the pirate crew’s fighting spirit grew even more fierce.

Yet Leylin showed not the slightest concern. He looked at his status window which had changed. The A.I. Chip displayed the newly collected data.

[Leylin Faulen, Race: Human Rank 8 Wizard, Strength: 3.5, Vitality: 4.5, Spirit: 8, Status: Healthy, Feats: Sturdy, Erudite, Spell Slots: Rank 3(2), Rank 2(4), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]

A rank 8 wizard did not have the ability to access a deeper level of the Weave. The only benefits Leylin received were two more spell nodes. What was more important was that the advancement had increased his contact and authority within the deeper levels of the Weave. This was bound to be of great help to the A.I. Chip's analysis.

As Leylin continued to advance in rank, the speed of the A.I. Chip's analysis would only increase.

‘With the Magus World's standards, a rank 5 Professional is on the level of an acolyte. A rank 10 Professional is on the level of a rank 2 Magus, and someone at rank 15 compares to rank 15. A rank 20 Legend would enter the realm of Morning Stars...’ After living in the World of Gods for so many years, Leylin had developed a very deep understanding of how ranks were calculated here.

‘A rank 25 peak-ranked Legend is equivalent to a Radiant Moon Magus! If it's like this, then the divine would be equivalent to a rank 6 Breaking Dawn Magus. A demi-god here would be equivalent to a semi-rank 7 Magus, which is the same rank as my original body...’

‘The weak minor gods are the same as rank 7 Magi who have comprehended laws, and the major gods are similar to Magi who have fused laws, and are rank 8 beings like the Mother Core who've found their own path...’

At this point, the entire power rankings of the World of Gods began to unfold before Leylin. Although it was possible that some ranks did not entirely correspond, but on the whole Leylin

believed in his own deductions and the A.I. Chip's simulation had never been wrong. There were also no holes in its logic.

‘Although this native body is making rapid progress, in reality my current strength is only equal to a rank 1 Magus of the Magus World...’ This comparison rendered Leylin completely speechless. It seemed that he still had a long way to go on his path to becoming strong in the World of Gods

“Boss! We’ve cleared out this ship completely! Victory is ours!” Just at this moment, Robin Hood appeared before Leylin and reported with a face filled with excitement. He didn’t seem to care about the traces of blood still left on his face.

“It’s already finished? Have the casualties been counted yet?” Leylin had a neutral expression on his face. He had personally completely destroyed the most powerful opponents and even half of the normal crew. If his sailors couldn’t achieve victory under these circumstances, then he would need to completely reevaluate his strategy.

“With the weapons you gave us, many comrades only received slight injuries. Three have died, and five were seriously injured. We’ve already eased their suffering and sent them on their way...” Robin Hood spoke with a trace of helplessness in his voice.

Severe injuries on the sea were like a death sentence in this era unless one was lucky enough to have a cleric or other precious healing skills or items on them.

“Mm, keep track of them. Calculate and distribute rewards accordingly when we’re done...” Leylin suddenly hit himself on the head. “Oh right! After we capture Half-Merfolk Island, set out again and bring the family members of the pirates who surrendered to us to the Faulen Island. Give the families of the dead ones a pension.”

This was really to cut off the pirates’ escape route, and grasp their family members in his palm. With this, the chance of them betraying him was now very small.

“As you command, boss!” Robin Hood clearly understood Leylin’s intentions, and nodded vigorously, not daring to object at all.

“We really do need a cleric to raise morale and heal wounds. It seems like we can’t do with them.”

“If you have no objections to rank, then I know a few...” Isabel came to Leylin’s side at this moment, with a strange look in her eyes. Leylin scratched his nose, as he clearly knew why her expression was different.

It was easy for her to relate to what he had done before, and it was also the reason why he had ordered for there to be no captives, decisively slaughtering all the Merfolk Pirates in a hurry.

His subordinates, on the other hand, were still on the other ship and couldn’t see his actions across the wide sea. Even though he had left those mummified corpses, a wizard had skills which could

achieve the same effect such as Absorb, Vampire's Touch, and Life Drain, so nothing could be proven.

Although this could fool Robin Hood and the others, but it definitely could not fool Isabel, who was also a follower of a devil. Her expression showed that she'd discovered something.

However, they were both on the same boat. Leylin believed that Isabel wouldn't betray him, because the church would never accept her either.

"Take a group out to sail this battleship. We'll go together to Half-Merfolk Island!" Under Leylin's command, they rushed to clean up the marks left by battle. The two enormous ships then sailed towards Half-Merfolk Island together.

At this moment, the pirates' eyes were filled with fanaticism and emotion. After all, they knew very well that after Half-Merfolk Island had lost their entire pirate group, the defenceless girls would not be able to refuse their tyrannical advances. Also, the Merfolk Pirates had been in business for many years, and the wealth they had accumulated had made their eyes green with envy.

Before they reached land, Leylin gathered his troops together.

"I'll say this once again!" Leylin's gaze swept across the group of pirates. Through continuous shows of power, they did not dare to betray Leylin's slightest command, and their loyalty to him had even increased considerably.

“We currently need their wealth and their slaves to work for us! We even need them to join us and become fresh blood. If they dare to resist us then immediately kill them without discussion, but I need captives. Understood?” In Leylin’s view, the family members that survived the pirates would be very rebellious, but they would make good slaves. Even if that wasn’t possible, then they could still be sold for a tidy profit; so what was the point of killing them all?

Humans were a very valuable resource on the sea. Even island natives had special teams of slave catchers enter the jungles and brave the difficulties of disease and monsters. They would then bitterly struggle against different tribes to get their hands on some more slaves.

“Don’t worry, boss! We know what to do!” Robin Hood began to laugh, and the sound of it was as ugly as a night owl’s hoot.

Leylin nodded, knowing how his underlings, who were like complete animals, would behave after they took over Half-Merfolk Island. Perhaps they wouldn’t murder the prisoners, but the islanders would suffer a lot of abuse.

Leylin decided to turn a blind eye to these sort of things. In any case, an appropriate amount of deterrence was necessary, and perhaps this would be beneficial to keeping his rule over them stable. After all, pirate women didn’t have any chastity to speak of, and it was in their instinct to follow the strong...

Eagle Eye! After the spell took effect, half of the island appeared before Leylin’s eyes.

‘Mm, it looks like there are the beginnings of a small hamlet. Not bad!’ In his field of vision was a tiny port, and next to the port there was a developing wheat field. The pirate captain that had died at his hand had some talent in running the place. Surprisingly, he knew to gather people to reclaim the wasteland, and he’d really produced results.

It was a shame that all of this had been so conveniently given to Leylin.

Seeing the Merfolk battleship return, and even bringing another ship back, the port burst into an uproar. There were even people who thought that it was the Merfolk Pirates returning victoriously, and began to gather at the port to welcome them back.

It was not until the ship drew closer that they realised that the deck had traces of a fierce battle. The flag which represented the Mermaid Pirates had changed hands. Only then did they cry out in alarm and scatter everywhere, just like wild ducks whose nest had been disturbed.

“Brothers, get to work!” Robin Hood’s booming voice rang out, ushering in a burst of excited cries.

Chapter 825 - Plunder

The afterglow of the sun slowly dispersed on the surface of the sea, making it look like a rippling golden scale. By sunset, the battle was already winding up.

It couldn't be really be called a battle. The elites of the Merfolk Pirates as well as the adult merfolk had all died in the earlier naval battle, and the only ones left were old, young, or female. Even without many pirates under his command Leylin's raid had been successful.

Once the sun had set completely, Leylin stood on the balcony of the two-floored house that had belonged to the pirate captain. He was watching the tiny spots of flames flickering in the port. Large-scaled arson would have completely destroyed the place, so Leylin had forbidden it before they completely looted it.

Robin Hood's face was flushed with excitement. He stood in the room with Isabel who did not participate in the plunder, reporting the results of the battle to Leylin. Leylin could tell that the spoils were quite decent just by looking at his face. A smile arose on his face as Robin Hood finished his report.

"Boss, we've struck gold!" Robin Hood had already grown to resemble a pirate more and more, or perhaps he had just stopped repressing his true nature, "Just the loot from the warehouse could fill half the ship; there's massive quantities of sugar, silk, and even pottery and woodwork!"

“We also found this inside the villa,” Isabel added as she kicked open a black trunk next to Leylin’s feet.

The wooden lid was covered in floral patterns, and a golden radiance poured out of the chest when it was opened. Robin Hood’s eyes filled with greed, but he quickly suppressed it.

“That fellow hid his treasures very well, it took a lot of effort to find this,” Isabel’s eyes were also sparkling like little stars, as if she had also completely fallen in love with piracy.

This was just like what Leylin had read in one of the ancient tomes in this world: ‘Gold! What a beautiful and adorable little thing. It can turn a coward into a warrior and evil to good. It can make rivers flow upstream, and such a tiny thing can send a damned soul to heaven!’

Even the churches needed wealth, and their requirement was massive at that. They needed it to influence their believers, and expand the scope of their power. This was especially true of Waukeen’s, which hoarded more money than dragons. They stuck their hands in every source they could find to earn more money.

Inside the wooden trunk were stacks of gold, alongside a few precious gems which almost blinded Robin Hood. Isabel was more resistant to the allure, perhaps because she was a noblewoman. She still remained rational in the face of the riches.

“There are a total of 782 kronas, and each one weighs 18 grams. That’s at least 1500 pieces of Dambrath gold! Adding on the

precious gems, this entire trunk is worth over 2000 gold...”

Leylin picked up a single gold krona, which was heavier than the gold coins he was used to. The decorative designs on them as well as the portrait were completely different to those of the Dambrath Kingdom’s coinage. “Mm. There’s no need to exchange the kronas, they can still be used on the continent.”

In the World of Gods, any organisation that was a duchy or greater in authority could issue its own coins, and this created many different metal currencies. But the church of the Goddess of Wealth was always dedicated to normalising their own gold coin, the krona. They wanted it to replace all other coins, becoming an official standard. Still, due to the secret resistance of many gods, they had never been successful. The gods believed such a thing would bring Waukeen many followers, so it would only be odd if they supported it.

Even though this was the situation, it was the Goddess of Wealth issuing these coins. All the churches serving her would vouch for them, so it was still the strongest currency circulating in the entire World of Gods.

‘It looks like these pirates all hid their wealth in their homes,’ Leylin thought of the captives he had— If he had directly murdered Steve in his home, and dug out his buried treasures, he would have certainly gained as many benefits as he had now. It was a pity that he didn’t have the time back then that he did now.

“Putting the treasure aside, what about the people and the slaves?” With this funding, Leylin had the confidence to build a

profitable industry centered at Faulen Island. The most important thing now was to be able to obtain enough human resources.

“Our force was too small to blockade the port immediately. Many of the islanders managed to escape...” Robin Hood’s expression grew ugly when he mentioned this point. “We’ve managed to capture 90 people by now, most of them elderly, women, or children. There was also some retired pirate trash.”

Robin Hood spat out, and it was obvious that he had suffered while capturing these violent old pirates. Becoming either physically handicapped or growing senile with age, these pirates had been forced to retire. However, their ferocious and bloody nature hadn’t left them one bit.

“I hung them to the death.” Robin Hood did not dare to conceal anything in front of Leylin.

“Mm... Even if they are captives, there are many ways to distinguish them. How many of the captured ones are merfolk, how many human? How many of them were originally slaves?” Leylin clearly did not plan to pursue those problems, and he instead directly asked about his biggest concerns.

“The merfolk resisted most violently, and many of them fled. We’ve only managed to capture 19 so far, the other 71 are humans and natives. All of them seem to have been slaves.” Although he didn’t have the definite details on the numbers, what Robin Hood did have was enough to satisfy Leylin.

“Very good. There are different classes and ranks even amongst slaves. The merfolk were originally the highest class here, and now that we’ve killed their families and stripped them of their wealth we’ll have gained their enmity. They won’t put their faith in us, so just kill them all.

“As for those other humans and the native slaves, take all of them away and slowly screen them.” From his own life as a human, Leylin had deeply understood the feeling the rest had: ‘If they’re not human, they won’t think and act like us.’

On the other hand, Robin Hood didn’t think of those Merfolk Pirates as the same as him either. He immediately agreed to leave and slaughter them.

“Wait, why don’t you hand all those captive merfolk to me?” Isabel stepped out at this moment, her eyes filled with a bloodthirsty gleam.

“That’s acceptable,” Leylin nodded immediately. Demons all loved chaos and massacres, and her acts of piracy had most likely given Isabel many benefits.

Night fell, and the whole port wept after it was ravaged by the invaders. Smoke was still rising from it on the next day.

“The goods have all been transported to the Scarlet Tiger, boss!” Robin Hood respectfully reported.

“Very good, sound the bugle!” Leylin stood on the deck of the newly christened Scarlet Tiger, and issued the command with a peaceful expression on his face.

This Scarlet Tiger was the same as Black Tiger from before. Leylin had just decided to massively refit the ship, and he’d additionally decided to change its name.

He could imagine the name of this ship spreading across the entire Dambrath Sea in the future, accompanied by his cousin’s reputation in battle.

The deep bugle horn sounded, and after a night of wreaking havoc, a whole bunch of sailors with dark and heavy bags under their eyes scattered out of the islanders’ homes in twos and threes, gathering on the deck.

“Listen!” Leylin opened the treasure chest filled with gold kronas in front of the pirates, and the golden glow made their eyes light up with greed.

Yet, looking at whom the foot currently stepping on the gold coins belonged to, they immediately withdrew their greedy gazes. Over the voyage and their battles, Leylin had already used countless lives to demonstrate his savagery that exceeded theirs.

Sweeping over all the pirates with his gaze, Leylin was satisfied with the bowed heads that didn’t dare look him in the eye. Only then did he continue, “Everyone here will get three gold coins, and those who’ve killed an enemy get yet another. Professional kills

will be counted separately.”

Many pirates immediately cheered at this news.

Leylin was very satisfied with this atmosphere. Just using military force to intimidate these pirates was not enough. It was necessary to demonstrate that, with him, they could snatch more things and gain more benefits. Only then would they follow him even to hell.

From now, these pirates would probably take some more initiative in battles.

After he had distributed everything, Leylin immediately issued a new command, “Set this whole place on fire! Afterwards, we sail!”

Dense black smoke quickly rose from the port as it was engulfed in raging flames. The fire quickly spread. The two pirate battleships laden with riches and slaves slowly left the port, and some of the pirates still had looks of regret on their faces.

‘The terrain and condition of the place was very good, and there was a neat foundation as well. Such a shame, it was an excellent base...’ Leylin looked on as the fire lit up the dock’s sky, but his expression did not change.

He had always planned to burn down Half-Merfolk Island. It wasn’t just the island, even the Black Tigers’ stronghold as well. These places did not belong to him, and the pirates had been

subordinate to Marquis Louis. Even if he occupied this place, Leylin would perhaps soon attract the attention of the Black Skeletons and Tigersharks.

Chapter 826 - Pirates' Cove

The only thing Leylin could do now was hide somewhere secret, where his enemies could never find him. Only a fool would jump about shouting when he was weak.

“Isabel, Robin Hood!” he suddenly called out.

“You were looking for me, boss?” Robin Hood respectfully arrived in front of Leylin. After the battle, this first mate seemed to have changed dramatically.

Leylin stretched his hand out on the map of the ocean. “Mm, the two of you take the merfolk ship and bring the slaves to the pirates’ families.”

Be it Faulen Island or Marquis Louis’ fiefdom, the Baltic archipelago, they were all new discoveries in the waters surrounding the Dambrath Kingdom, and that was also the only characteristic they shared. New, uninhabited islands seemed to emerge endlessly one after the other, full of both wealth and dangers. It was simply too easy to find a temporary base for his crew.

Of course, the condition was that Leylin could deal with the dangerous beasts in those territories, and they could brave the harsh weather and environment.

Taking into consideration that Robin Hood had the other sailors’ loyalty, Leylin intentionally sent his cousin Isabel over as well.

With her there, even if he couldn't control the entire ship, he could presumably intimidate the disloyal ones without much problem.

As a matter of fact, Leylin had plans to nurture this cousin of his. After all, he couldn't remain here commanding the pirates forever, so Isabel would serve as his stand-in. Although Robin Hood was more suited to this role, he was too feral. Leylin could not give this fellow too much space to make decisions so early on in his venture. It wasn't because he was scared that Robin would betray him, but it was just that Robin didn't have the instincts of a superior.

On the other hand, Isabel did not possess much authoritative power, but what she did have was enough to cow these pirates into submission.

Watching the merfolk ship leave, Leylin waved his hand. "Set off, we're going to Pirates' Cove!"

Pirates' Cove was a port that provided services for pirates. It could be called the gathering part for the shady figures of the seas.

The port sold intelligence, goods, and even top-grade elven slaves. Of course, one needed to have the courage to take the risk and buy something; as a port where pirates disposed of stolen goods, the things they sold were definitely unclean in origin. Even Marquis Louis, who controlled the Baltic archipelago, did not allow too many stolen treasures pass through his territory, regretfully giving up on the profits that came to Pirates' Cove.

As for the port's location, many of the old pirates under Leylin knew of it. The route wouldn't be a problem at all, but there were several dangerous areas they had to pass through.

"Are you sure the route won't have any problems, Cyclops?" Leylin opened up the map of the ocean as he called over a one-eyed pirate. The sailor had a courage bred from years of killing, and although he had only one eye its gleam caused others to tremble with fear.

It was only at this moment that a flower-like smile bloomed on Cyclops' stubbled face. He revealed his few yellowing teeth, "Don't worry, Boss. I've sailed to Pirates' Cove with Steve a few times, and at that time I was even the navigator's assistant. I can get there with my eyes closed!"

"Very well, you're now the ship's navigator. If you do well, you'll be the Scarlet Tiger's first mate once we reach the port." This was the promise Leylin made to this pirate in whom he had just placed his trust.

"Yes, boss!" A first mate would receive a greater share of the booty than the other pirates, and would also have authority over the others. Cyclops' remaining eye gleamed with excitement.

"Very well, you can leave now. Send Giant over!" Leylin waved his hand and watched Cyclops' back as he left. His eyes showed that he had fallen into deep thought.

Although he was giving these defeated pirates positions one by

one, he hadn't completely let his guard down against them. For example, he couldn't trust that Cyclops wasn't deliberately leading the fleet into dangerous waters. He had already obtained the coordinates of Pirates' Cove through other means, from merchants and pirates.

'He told me the correct location, and also suggested the most efficient route. It looks like he's truly pledged his allegiance to me.' Cyclops didn't know that he had just narrowly avoided death's door. On the contrary, he was in good spirits from Leylin's promise, and he quickly executed the tasks that Leylin had asked him to do.

"Boss, lookin' fer me?" A deep, coarse voice sounded as a heavysset man walked in. He was more than 8 feet tall, and he had to lower his head to enter the captain's cabin. His flesh trembled with every step he took, like he was some sort of half-giant.

"Yes. Giant, I want you to lead the Scarlet Tiger's battle squad. Choose ten men for now, wait until we reach Pirates' Cove and recruit more." Leylin told him the plan with crossed arms.

The leader of the battle squadron was often the right-hand man of the captain. The battle squad was also at the forefront of every fight, so the position of its leaders had rather stringent requirements on strength.

Leylin had personally tested the might of this pirate that was called Giant. Not only did he have boundless strength, but he also had unparalleled talent in cultivation as a fighter. He could already release his qi and use martial techniques. Other than Leylin

himself, only Isabe; could match him in close quarters combat.

Furthermore, this Giant had a straightforward personality; after numerous losses while dueling Leylin, he became more obedient and was easy for Leylin to control.

“Just pick anyone, huh?” Giant asked, clearly thinking of putting his own men into his team. However this was normal, otherwise even if he was strong as an individual, he would still be crushed by the other pirates.

“Yes, the sailors on the Scarlet Tiger, be it my sailors or the captured pirates, are all for your choosing,” With regards to this point, Leylin turned a blind eye.

“Aye, I’ll go and wake them up, and choose them one-on-one!” Giant looked extremely excited.

“As you wish!” Leylin didn’t have anything to say about Giant’s method of recruitment, and just waved him away.

As the leader of the battle squadron, if there weren’t a few trusted aides on the battlefield to take a knife for him, then perhaps he wouldn’t even be able to survive a single battle. It was necessary to allow him to choose his aides.

Furthermore, Leylin also believed that Giant wouldn’t dare to betray him. He was confident that the cost of rebellion was so incredibly high that it would eliminate all thoughts of betrayal...

The endless voyage, the battles and the struggle, challenged them over and over again. Leylin was confident that this journey to Pirates' Cove would whip his crew into shape.

'On the whole, even a well-known pirate crew on the outer seas needs about a hundred pirates,' Leylin traced his finger on the map carelessly, 'Take the Black Tigers, or even the Merfolk Pirates which we just destroyed; normal pirate crews all have more than a hundred people, and their captains are even rank 10 Professionals with exceedingly good equipment.'

'Truly large-scale pirate crews need at least 300 pirates and above, and also need a number of ships. If I want a main battleship, it will have to be magically refitted or receive a cleric's blessing.'

Such a crew was configured like the small coastal fleet of a minor coastal duchy. If he had such strength, Leylin would be able to find a rather good position amongst the continent's navy, or even that of other countries. Who, then, would fight him without good reason?

As a result, there were only three truly large scaled pirate crews in the Dambrath Seas: the Black Skeletons, Tigersharks, and Barbarians.

Two of those pirate crews were even under the control of Marquis Louis. In addition, the other fleets owned by the marquis could not be underestimated. One of them was a professional

slavers' fleet.

This fleet had always been at the forefront of clashes with the natives, and Marquis Louis had used a lot of gold coins to arm it. It was even more powerful than the kingdom's elite navy!

Leylin's elimination of the Black Tigers and Merfolk Pirates would at best be him taking out the marquis' trash. He couldn't be considered to have encountered the marquis' main force.

Only once he was able to destroy the Black Skeletons, Tigersharks and the slavers' fleet in one fell swoop would he be able to deal a fatal strike to the Baltic archipelago's trade. However, this was almost impossible. Leylin could only continue to act from the shadows, and first clip the marquis' wings.

It was very unrealistic for Leylin to fight against a Marquis of the kingdom now. However, Leylin was not an ordinary person. He would use any means necessary to accomplish his goals, without fear of the consequences.

He was the sort of person that could be described as a reasonable lunatic, or perhaps he was the most insanely reasonable man.

"I'll need many men to accomplish this goal... Or allies," Leylin naturally would not be stupid enough to act against the marquis alone.

Furthermore, fighting Marquis Louis was one thing, but Viscount

Tim was another. Although Leylin had targeted Marquis Louis all along, the one who would bear the brunt of it was still the Viscount who coveted the Faulen lands.

Leylin wasn't sailing to Pirates' Cove for no reason. Besides recruiting the men he needed, he was preparing to look for more supporters. Marquis Louis would have offended quite a few people with his dominant character, even if he had done so unintentionally, and Leylin wanted to round those people up and take advantage of their power.

Leylin pressed his fingers heavily on the mark of the Pirates' Cove on the map, his eyes regaining their previous calm.

Chapter 827 - Barbarians

This was Pirates' Cove!

It was rumoured to be the holy land of pirates on the outer seas, where one could dispose of any problematic goods in exchange for attractive gold, or anything else your heart desired. They had the best women and the best rum, but only if one had enough gold. If anyone dared to cause trouble in the port, the enforcers would make them rue the day they were born!

As the most diverse place in the sea, where honest men and crooks mixed with each other, it was awash with information.

Quite often, a plump and juicy target passed by and one could see the magnificent sight of thousands of sails spreading open.

Many pirates spontaneously formed privateering operations, and disguised among the myriads of ships were a few powerful battleships armoured with magic. There were also a few unsinkable ships blessed by the Emperor of the Sea. Naturally, there were also much smaller boats that could only accommodate a dozen people, and even a few small canoes owned by the pirates.

The Pirates' Tide had occurred once, over 50 years ago, and they'd damaged a duchy's navy in the process of plundering a massive amount of wealth. The story became an excellent way of enticing ignorant fishermen's children into become pirates.

However, once Marquis Louis' Baltic archipelago rose in power,

Pirates' Cove had grown weaker day by day. Once two of the great pirate crews were roped in by the marquis, the place grew to no longer be as prosperous as before. It slowly turned into an ordinary den of pirates, where they fenced their stolen goods.

Even though it had become like this, the background of the port was still extremely important. Not only had it established a town with an air of importance, they had won over many churches as even pirates needed the healing of the gods or the comfort of a priest.

Furthermore, the evil gods would not deny pirate believers; some perhaps even schemed to become the gods of piracy...

One morning, a fleet with a bizarre flag entered the docks. The crew could be considered large for its kind, and they seemed to have experienced many intense battles. The hull still had marks of battle, slashed by swords.

‘This looks like the main battleship of a crew... Why don't I recognise the flag?’ The clerk who was responsible for registering ships on the dock rubbed his eyes in disbelief. He could confirm that he'd never seen that bright scarlet flag in his career, with its sinister lifelike skull and dagger.

It was at this moment that a group of pirates came down from the pirate ship, and the clerk welcomed them with a professional smile, “Welcome to Pirates' Cove, here we have—”

Before the clerk could finish speaking, the young man just waved

him away with the toss of a golden coin.

The gold coin that the young pirate had used wasn't a Dambrath coin, but it was the even more valuable gold krona!

'Is this youth the captain of these pirates? What a dangerous man...' The pirates standing behind the young man had an aura of death about them, especially the giant who was over two metres tall. He could've been mistaken for a small mountain.

However, these fearsome fellows all acted like fluffy little white rabbits behind the young man, which made the clerk's heart jump into his mouth. He came to realise that the man he faced was possibly a very extraordinary person.

"I know all the rules of this place, isn't it 5 coins to anchor our fleet here for a day?"

The clerk was a former pirate himself, and subconsciously assessed others in strength. The internal injuries which forced him to retire still persisted, forcing him to take up clerical work.

In truth, Leylin felt like the clerk was a very interesting person. Very few in the World of Gods received an education, and a pirate who could write was as rare as the mythical phoenix. Still, he didn't have the heart to discuss anything with him after the long journey. The violent storms and sneak attacks from the other races had fatigued him a little.

“Recommend the best inn, and tell me where I can recruit some sailors. You see the ship behind me, no? It needs to be reworked heavily.” Leylin immediately tossed out these requests, and before the clerk could show his dissatisfaction, he immediately added, “If your recommendations are good, then this will be yours.”

Another gold krona glowed brightly in his palm.

“Aye, your lordship! There is no one more familiar with Pirates’ Cove than me!” The clerk unwittingly swallowed, his Adam’s apple bobbing in his throat.

He simultaneously shot a glance at the signature that Leylin had left, the beautiful cursive making his heart jump, before he noted the information written. ‘Scarlet Tiger pirate crew? I’ve never heard of it before, has it just sprung up out of nowhere?’

Small pirate crews were born frequently in these waters, and death was frequent as well. Nobody would raise an eyebrow at a new pirate crew that relied on fishing to make a living in peacetime, only turning to amateur piracy when their options ran out. These weaker pirate crews were like ants and could perish at any time, but more pirates would emerge the next year.

The treasures of the outer sea, the frequent wars on the continent and its politics, as well as the persecution from the church... All these caused many adventurers, unbelievers, and even those faithful to demons and devils stream into these seas.

The sea was a place where good Gods had little influence, and the

few strong evil gods did not mind them. It only rendered the place even more complicated.

The Dambrath area was only a tiny part of the outer seas, and it was still in the early years of development. As a result, no especially strong organisations had formed, and Marquis Louis, with the kingdom's support, had become the strongest person here.

“If you would like me to recommend an inn, then the ones opened by the Barbarians are the best choice!” The clerk immediately answered without hesitation.

“Barbarians...” Leylin's mouth curved into a smile as he thought of the crew. They were part of the big three.

The Barbarians were different from the other two crews, the organisation was made up purely of a single race. Made of barbarian warriors and priests, they were the only ones who had not been reined in by Marquis Louis.

The Barbarian crew shared a deeply hostile relationship with the Black Skeletons and the Tigersharks, and seemed to launch a large-scale battle with them every few years. They were the current head of Pirates' Cove, and the other free crews had formed the Dark World organisation to protect them. There was nothing wrong in saying that this place was the base camp of organisations who opposed Marquis Louis.

The inn opened by the secret master of Pirates' Cove was

naturally the safest place in the whole area.

“As for sailors, just shout out in any random tavern and ten pirates will run up to you. How you choose them is up to you, and of course you need to settle the tabs of those you hire at the bars...” As expected, the clerk was extremely familiar with the Pirates’ Cove, and he even fervently recommended a certain shipyard to Leylin. That shipyard may not have a high degree of credibility, but they were certainly good enough to do some routine maintenance on a pirate ship.

Leylin silently remembered the address of the shipyard, but he did not choose to go there directly. Instead, he brought his men to the barbarian inn recommended by the clerk.

On the way, Leylin wordlessly assessed those around him.

Most of the people who were able to live in Pirates’ Cove were retired pirates or others of that ilk. Although some were too weak to even stand up to the wind, and some were even disabled, they all had one or two skills that kept them going.

Of course, many more were prostitutes in revealing clothing, directly soliciting customers. Although Leylin didn’t think much of them, there were a bunch of animals following behind him who were clearly unable to hold back. If it wasn’t for Leylin’s command, a majority of them would have broken formation.

‘They even have a Thieves’ Guild!’ Leylin looked at the crossed dagger symbol on a street corner thoughtfully. He did not feel

worried as he had plenty of time left, and still needed to arrange a place for a large group of men.

The barbarians' inn was in a prime portion of Pirates' Cove, and there were even two armed barbarian warriors standing guard at the door. It made everyone feel exceptionally safe.

Leylin did not trust in the law and security of Pirates' Cove, and did not want to cause any trouble. Even if it cost a bit more money, staying there was an excellent decision.

'They're actually using two rank 5 Professionals to guard the place— is this pirate crew very strong? It's not surprising that they can contend against the two large pirate crews propped up by Marquis Louis,' Leylin assessed the two barbarian guards with interest.

The barbarians were scattered throughout the World of Gods, much taller than ordinary humans with light green skin and muscles that were as solid as granite. Whether male or female, they were all muscle maniacs.

Rumour had it that they were mentally challenged and were even more stupid than orcs. As a result, only a few uncivilised gods preferred to favour them, and they occupied a weak position in the civilised world. In many places, mercenary associations were periodically tasked with clearing up barbarian bandits and tribes.

Chapter 828 - Inn

‘A.I. Chip, scan their stats!’ Leylin commanded inwardly.

[Beep! Establishing mission, initiating scan.]

Invisible ripples swept across the area, and the stats of one the barbarian guards were soon displayed.

[Name: Unknown, Race: Barbarian Warrior, Rank 5, Strength: 5, Agility: 2, Vitality: 4, Spirit: 1. Feats: 1. Strong: Barbarians possess increased strength and vitality. 2. Berserk: When they hit emotional extremes, some barbarians have the ability to enter a berserk state of violence, increase strength by 1 and reducing agility and spirit by 0.5.]

The A.I. Chip scanned the other barbarian as well, and he had similar stats.

‘These two barbarian warriors both have Berserk abilities?’ Leylin secretly compared them to his own men, ‘If they really fight, then even Cyclops can’t beat them. Perhaps Giant could get in one strike if he risked his life, but after that...

‘After all, it’s rumoured that barbarians are very well suited to be

warriors, but the intelligent ones amongst them can also learn spells, and are capable of using magic...'

This sort of magic ability which was linked to the bloodline was different from that of wizards, somewhat similar instead to the powers of Warlocks. However, their magic was rather restricted, and only a select few were able to use it.

Not even the elite troops of the continent dared to provoke barbarian clans with members who had the ability to use magic.

'It is generally understood that with the scale of the Barbarian pirate crew, the number of women and children that they have to feed must be even greater. On this basis, it's normal for them to have a few magical Professionals. No wonder they were able to resist Marquis Louis for so long...'

All of these thoughts whirled through Leylin's mind in the blink of an eye. To anyone watching from the outside, it looked like he'd merely glanced at the warriors before sweeping past them into the inn.

A dense odour of rum mixed with tobacco smoke welcomed him inside, causing him to wrinkle his brows. Many other travelers were seated in the inn's reception, and the tables there were heaped with a mountain of roasted meat and fruit. Barrels of rum were opened directly, despite a number of drunkards next to them glugging them all down.

Many scantily dresses maids flitted like butterflies through the

main hall, occasionally felt up by various customers. They cursed at it, but still laughed all the while.

One really could not ask for more from an inn which specially catered to pirate customers. Fortunately, Leylin's earlier frown was just a natural reaction from many years of living like a noble. His years of enduring hardship still allowed him to endure the vile environment he was now in.

It was clear that his group had attracted the attention of the other customers when they suddenly burst in, especially since Leylin was such a pretty little thing. There were even some reckless fools who wolf whistled at him.

"Giant!" Leylin said in a low voice, shaking his head.

"Do you want to die?" Giant emerged from the shadows. His enormous muscles and the faint traces of scars on them gave him an incredibly oppressive aura. The pirates jumped in surprise, and Giant disdainfully spat a mouthful of saliva at them and drew a line across his throat meaningfully.

"Well? If you're not happy, then let's take it outside," Giant clearly knew the rules, and Leylin nodded at his words inwardly.

The pirates looked at Giant's enormous body as well as the intensely dangerous feeling he gave off, and immediately sat down obediently like a bunch of small chicks, not daring to utter another word.

It was absolutely necessary for a pirate to have an instinct for danger. One look at Giant was enough to know that he was not to be trifled with, forget Leylin who was his master.

The pirates were beginning to secretly regret their earlier blunder, but there were naturally a few whose eyes gleamed with sinister intentions. One could not dominate Pirates' Cove with strength alone, and every day there were several reckless and arrogant novices whose bodies were chucked into the sea.

Leylin was very happy to see the pirates developing plans to provoke him. When the time came, he resolved to teach them the true meaning of fear.

The hall remained silent for only a moment before returning to its normal uproarious state. No one wanted to break the rules laid down by the Barbarians and offend the crew.

“What can I do for you, guest?” As Leylin came to the counter, he found that the boss was a tall and beautiful woman who wore a scarlet low-cut dress and a fur shawl.

Her long red tail naughtily swept across her waist. She shot Leylin a sugar-sweet smile, and the mole at the edge of her mouth grew animated. The boss of the inn was a fox girl, and a stunningly top-grade one at that. Leylin could almost hear his men salivating from behind his back.

“I have 23 men here, are there enough rooms for them all to stay?” Leylin asked immediately. His eyes swept over the fox girl,

but his gaze did not linger for too long. There was a flash of surprise in the fox girl's eyes at his attitude, as it was very rare that a young man like him could resist her allure.

“Haha... Of course there are enough! I just need to know what kind of rooms you need,” the fox girl changed her strategy, slowly shifting her sinuous waist and revealing her beautiful curves, “We have ordinary rooms here that can fit 5 people. They cost 2 silver bars per night. The medium-ranking rooms are for 3 people, and costs 5 silver bars. What do you need, little brother?”

Her eyes sparkled brightly as she looked at Leylin appraisingly, “Of course, a young nobleman like you would want our best rooms. Not only will it be for you alone, but you will also have an enthusiastic maid serving you. It's not too expensive, and it'll only cost you two Dambrath gold coins per night...”

Leylin clearly felt the power of an enchantment coming from her eyes, but it was completely useless. His spiritual force had already reached 8, and this was nothing.

“I need a single room. Giant, Cyclops and Hulk will have a medium-rank room. The rest will all stay in ordinary rooms,” Leylin confidently gave himself the best room, and placed his two officers as well as a soldier from his family into the medium-ranked room. The rest were given ordinary treatment. This was only right, it wasn't like gold fell from the sky.

The bunch of common pirates were already grateful to have the chance to stay in such a luxurious inn. If Leylin wasn't afraid that he would find all his men's corpses in a dreadful ditch on the

second day, he would have planned for them all to stay in the Scarlet Tiger itself.

“You can all leave after you receive your room number and key. I have have one requirement: you must all return at night!” Leylin’s announcement immediately attracted a burst of cheers from the pirates behind him.

After the period of killing, and the battles with the wind and waves, these pirates had long been physically and mentally exhausted. They wished to let off some steam.

“If you have any requests, remember to call for me.” The fox girl boss twisted her slender and supple waist as she brought Leylin to his room, leaving behind a string of coy smiles as she left him at the door.

Cyclops had his ear pressed against the door, and nodded after a moment, “Boss, she’s gone.”

Leylin was rather speechless at his method, but this was Cyclops’ territory. There were too many methods and means to obtain information, and he didn’t particularly care to dispel the enthusiasm of his men. He simply nodded and said, “Do you know why I called all of you over?”

“Boss, if you have an order then just tell us!” Giant scratched his head. His coarse face made him look a little foolish, but Leylin had once seen him sturdily squeeze the heads of two enemies until they directly exploded. He wasn’t fooled by his appearance whatsoever.

“Mm, the men have gone out to indulge in drink and pleasure. Watch them closely, and don’t let them stir up any trouble. This time tomorrow, I want all the information on Pirates’ Cove here, understood?”

“Aye, boss! I’ll watch those scallywags!” Cyclops licked his lips, smiling sinisterly.

“Very well, go out and have fun!” Leylin threw three small money pouches to them, and the experienced Cyclops immediately knew it was the merry clinking of gold coins.

“Blimey! There’s a bonnie gift, boss, thank you!” After opening the money pouch and seeing the golden light that spilled out, Cyclops seemed to forget himself. Even the silent Hulk had a different look in his eyes.

Even though he put overwhelming pressure on them, he still had to fall to using money to bribe them in the end. Leylin did not have any other ideas; he needed special means to build a pirate crew that was capable in battle.

Leylin only rose to his feet after the three had left, and began to appraise the room with his hands held behind his back. The deluxe room was worth its price of two gold coins a day. Not only was it very spacious, with rather opulent decor, it even had its own washroom with a gleaming white porcelain bath crafted by elves, a precious luxury even on the mainland.

“May I ask if the guest is here?” Just when Leylin was preparing the bath, the tender voice of a girl came from outside the door, making Leylin furrow his brows.

“What’s the matter?”

“I-I’ve come to pour hot water for you,” the girl outside the door seemed to be rather uneasy and disturbed, which made Leylin feel rather curious. There seemed to be many maids who engaged in part-time work at the inn, but this maid’s performance was particularly interesting.

“Come in, the door is unlocked.” As the door opened, a half-elf girl in a maid outfit walked in, with wheat-coloured skin and a tall and slender body. She wore a pair of black silk tights, and looked extremely suggestive.

‘A half-elf? No, this is...’ Leylin’s eyes suddenly narrowed.

Chapter 829 - Cry For Help

Elves were a populous intelligent race that all lived a secluded life on an enormous island. There were however remnants of some branch families on the mainland. They lived well under the protection of the elven god, and were blessed with good talent and long lives. Many of them made prominent contributions to the arts.

Naturally, elven slaves were highly sought after. Despite the protests and warnings of their race, their price had only increased, with wave after wave of adventurers hunting for them.

Half-elves were more common than purebloods. They still inherited the elfin beauty and elegance, and most of them stood out in terms of appearance, which had led to several disasters. It was not particularly surprising to see a half-elf maid in Pirates' Cove, but Leylin's expression had changed in spite of that.

“What's your name?”

“My name is Karen, respected young master!” The ‘half-elf’ forced a smile. It appeared that she was not very well trained, and could not properly display her bodily assets to her customers.

“It looks like you haven't been doing this for very long, how much are you for one night?” Leylin asked directly.

This sort of sudden humiliation made Karen want to clench her teeth, but she held herself back and revealed a dazzling smile, “One

Dambrath gold coin...”

The price was a little high, but Leylin still nodded, “It’s a reasonable price, especially for a half-drow like you...”

The moment he called her half-drow, Karen rose up angrily. She was like a kitten whose tail had been stepped on.

“How do you know that?” she blurted out. She immediately covered her mouth, but clearly realised that she’d already all but confirmed it.

“Your eye colour. The colouring agent you used to stain it can’t fool me. Your ears are also pointier than normal mixed-bloods by 12.4%, and they are slightly concave...” Leylin lightly pointed out the gaps in her disguise. His sharp observations made Karen subconsciously take a few steps back.

The corner of Leylin’s mouth tilted up in a smile as he saw Karen’s stats:

[Name: Karen, Rank 5 Assassin, Race: Half-Drow. Stats: Strength: 1 (3), Agility: 2 (5), Vitality: 0.5 (2), Spirit: 3, Feats: 1. Night Vision: Dark elves have the ability to see even at night. 2. Shadow Perception: Dark elves are sensitive to shadow particles, and are innately gifted assassins and pirates. Status: Poisoned by unknown toxin, causing strength, vitality and agility to fall!]

Karen's physical stats somewhat surprised Leylin. She even had the abilities of a rank 5 assassin, but some unknown poison had taken control of her, locking half of her strength away.

It was very clear that the person who controlled Karen from the shadows only thought that she was an ordinary half-elf, otherwise they would never have let her come here. Would that not be like sending someone out to assassinate himself?

Leylin smiled faintly. This rank 5 assassin could not touch even a hair on his head.

“Haven't dark elves always lived underground? How could you appear here, and even take up this line of work?”

Dark elves were a type of elf which were rumoured to live in the darkness. They had awoken the dark nature in their blood, becoming extremely brutal. They longed for violence, blood and chaos, and had separated from the regular elves to move underground. Some rumours said that their gifts in bed could make both men and immortals die of pleasure, that it was comparable to charm and pleasure magic.

“I'm a halfblood. I moved out from the underground with my clan, but we were all scattered in an attack. When I woke up, I was on a trading ship which was later attacked by the Barbarians...” Leylin's eyes seemed to be filled with magic charm, and Karen could only helplessly tell her story.

‘No wonder... Half-drow really don’t differ too much from half-elves, and only a specialised scholar would be able to tell the difference. She’s a rank 5 assassin, and she did not have enough power to fight back against the entire Barbarian pirate fleet, not to mention that she was affected by the toxin’s restrictions... Of course, an assassin’s camouflage and disguise abilities could let her fool others, so that they thought that she was an ordinary half-elf.’

Something dawned in Leylin’s eyes as he said, “And after that you were controlled by the pirates, and now work for them as a maid?”

“Yes...” Karen nodded, and her eyes seemed to fill with momentary hope. She immediately knelt on the ground, looking up at Leylin, “Sir! I beg you, please save me from this hellhole!”

“Save you?” Leylin had an evil smile on his face as he sat back down, “Why would I save you? Give me a reason.”

Even Leylin had to admit that Karen was a rare beauty, especially with her eyes which were like the ocean waves. Her unique charm gave him a subconscious favourable impression of her.

“I...” Karen bit her lip, “I’m a rank 5 assassin. If you can save me, I’m be willing to serve you for a hundred years. I swear it in the name of the Dark Maiden!”

The Dark Maiden was a god who tended towards the good alignment, and could not be reconciled with the gods that other dark elves believed in. If Karen believed in this god, then perhaps

this was the reason why she had been driven away from the underground.

“Why would you do that? Can’t you save up money to buy back your freedom?” Although she seemed rather out of practice, this was clearly not the first time she had done this sort of thing. This sort of life wasn’t completely unsuitable for a half-drow, and Leylin couldn’t think of why she would want to pay such a huge price for freedom.

“Is their price very high?” Leylin could only guess.

“No!” Karen’s lips curved into a rather heartbreaking smile, “They won’t ever let me go. As a slave, I don’t have the authority to buy my freedom. After I can’t be a maid anymore, those barbarians will sacrifice me to their gods...”

Leylin realised that the barbarians had saved her for some bloody and violent sacrificial rituals. Seeing Karen in that state, perhaps she had recently seen this happen several times, and so she began to plan her escape, begging Leylin for his help.

Even though she was pleading for help, she would meet an even worse fate if she asked the wrong person. Leylin seemed to have an air of nobility about him, and Karen was sure that he was not a pirate.

As a result, after realising that her cover had been broken, Karen immediately asked him for help. She almost did not mind promising to become his slave instead.

‘He’s a young man after all, if I could charm him...’ her eyes were filled with anticipation.

As a half-drow, she was born with the knowledge of how to handle males, and did not require further education on that matter. Although Leylin did not look too easily charmed, she was quite willing to at least try. When she thought of this, Karen’s heart seemed to be fired up, leaving two faint traces of a blush on her face. She appeared even more charming and lovely.

“A rank 5 assassin?” Leylin looked as if he was thinking over the matter with some difficulty, making Karen reluctant to mention her thoughts.

“You... Do you know anything about sailing?” After a long moment, Leylin stopped pondering and asked this question.

“Sailing?” Karen was shocked dumb. She originally thought that Leylin would come out with an outrageous request, but she had long made her mind up to use all her techniques to mesmerise him. She never thought that he would ask such a completely irrelevant question.

“Yes, I am a pirate captain, and I’m in need of sailors to be my underlings.” Leylin waved his hand and seemed to admit it very reluctantly. There was a trace of humour in his eyes, as if he was playing a joke on her, and Karen immediately knew that he had seen through all her plots.

“I... Honestly I don’t, but I will work hard to learn. I beg you, Sir,” Karen wanted to come up to Leylin and hug him, but Leylin nimbly dodged her.

“Then it looks like you aren’t much use to me,” Leylin said, making Karen’s heart completely sink.

“However, since you’re a dark elf, and you lived in the Underdark before, then you’re slightly worth something,” Leylin continued, his voice drifting into Karen’s ears and raising a thread of hope once again.

“Tell me, Karen, are you willing to become my dagger in the shadows, to help me dispatch my rivals, and drink the blood of my enemies?”

An invisible hand tilted Karen’s chin upwards, making her eyes widen considerably. “Mage Hand! You’re a wizard!”

This nobleman had come to a port where pirates fenced their goods, and although she did not know why, all Karen could see was opportunity! “I’m willing! In the name of the Dark Maiden I swear this— I will become your sharpest dagger!” Karen respectfully knelt down on her knees, making a strange gesture with her hand.

“Very well,” Leylin nodded. He really had recruited her on the basis of her being a half-drow assassin.

After all, he currently lacked a spy network and assassin group.

Since Karen had recently lived in the Underdark, she would have good experience and knowledge in torture and interrogation as well as assassination. As a rank 5 professional assassin, she was just barely good enough to be of use...

Chapter 830 - Tillen

“Very well, I’ll speak with the boss later about the issue of your ransom,” Leylin promised, rubbing his hands together.

“Many thanks, master!” Karen immediately began to address him differently. Although she currently looked like a weak little elfling, Leylin knew that once he cured her of her poison and armed her with a sharp dagger, this half-drow would immediately become a powerful god of death in the shadows.

After she had thanked him, the room’s atmosphere immediately grew awkward.

“Master... Would you like me to call my sister maids over?” Karen twisted the corner of her skirt, and looked extremely embarrassed.

“There’s no need. Didn’t you come to help me pour the hot water?” Leylin smiled faintly. The bloody battles and the accumulation of a great deal of life energy had left a fire in him that needed quenching.

“Yes, master!” Karen’s lips curved into a charming smile, and the entire room was soon enveloped in a layer of youthful lust.

Breakfast in the Barbarian Inn was a rich affair. The staples of fluffy and soft wheat bread and milk were present, and the intoxicating aroma of cheese and fried eggs was in the air. There were even several strings of juicy berries in a rattan basket nearby,

to tempt one's appetite.

There was a white napkin around Leylin's neck as he enjoyed his meal with fluid movements. Karen sat on his side and occasionally stole a few glances at him with a blush on her face. These gestures made Leylin smile inwardly; she was a very lovely creature indeed, and he had exceedingly enjoyed his stay last night.

The half-drow seemed to have special talent in that area, but Leylin was not some incapable youth himself. His strength was too much even for a dark elf.

At this moment, Cyclops' voice came from just outside the door, "Boss, can we come in?"

"Enter!" With Leylin's command, Cyclops, Giant and Hulk entered the place all at once.

Looking at the massive dark circles and bags under their eyes, it was easy to tell that what kind of merriment they had gotten up to last night. Even after they had diligently cleaned themselves, Leylin could still smell a strong stench of alcohol and perfume on them.

Cyclops and the others noticed Karen by Leylin's side, but the three pretended as if they hadn't seen her, their eyes filled with a rather questionable smile.

"I'll leave for now, master," Karen said after seeing the others

enter. She knew that Leylin had things to discuss with his subordinates, and smartly prepared to leave despite not finishing her breakfast.

“No need. You’re one of us now, so you should stay and listen,” Leylin said, motioning for Karen to stay.

Cyclops was shocked at this action, and he looked over the girl in appraisal. She was certainly just an elfling girl, and also a part-time prostitute, so why would she be recruited by the captain of their crew? However, since this was Leylin’s decision, they could not object to it.

Leylin picked up the white silk napkin and wiped the corners of his mouth before turning to Cyclops and the others, “So, how was last night?”

Cyclops knew that Leylin was naturally not enquiring about what mischief they had gotten up to. He cleared his throat, and began revealing the information they’d found, “Boss! I’ve already fully found out...

“In Pirates’ Cove, there are several merchant families that are interesting in our goods. However, our biggest patron is the boss of this inn... Haha.”

“That fox girl?” Leylin nodded, “What offer has she made us?”

“860 Dambrath gold coins for the whole lot! This price is rather

average amongst the offers we have received, but it would be the safest option,” Cyclops spat fiercely before continuing, “Other families may have offered us a higher price, but I can tell with just one eye what they are planning. Those fuckers!”

Cyclops was a pirate after all, and he subconsciously exploded into foul curses. However, Leylin did not mind the merchants. Pirates’ Cove had a mixed bag of characters, and it was not surprising that a pirate would have their own ideas and want to devour their fleet and their goods all in one go.

Compared to this, as the Barbarians were the biggest players in Pirates’ Cove, it was entirely normal for them to take in these stolen goods to sell them for a profit.

“Mm, this price isn’t bad.” Although Leylin had buckled down on a pile of sugar for himself, the rest of his goods were worth at least 3000 gold coins and above. Since they were stolen goods and therefore ‘dirty’, Leylin would be satisfied with a small profit after it had changed hands a few times.

“This is a detailed map of Pirates’ Cove, including the locations of all the churches!” Hulk respectfully handed a sheepskin scroll to Leylin, and also brought a reply from the shipyard, “The shipyard’s owner has already had a look at the Scarlet Tiger, and has said that there shouldn’t be any problems repairing it. However, the owner said that it would be impossible to magically refit the ship. As for the cost, he will need at least 300 gold coins more...”

“Our little bunny rabbits played hard last night, but nothing big

happened. They only had a fight with a few other drunkards,” Giant triumphantly announced, and just looking at his face one could tell that he did not lose the fight.

“Mm, we’ll rest here for 5 days. Hand the maintenance duties over to the shipyard owner, and ask him to finish the work as quickly as possible. We can make some concessions on the price.” It was only routine ship maintenance, and was not as if the ship’s entire keel was being replaced or massively refitted. In this world of extraordinary ability, if the shipyard master could put in all his effort to quickly complete it, there should virtually be no problems.

“Rest assured, boss!” Cyclops beat his chest confidently, taking control of the task. Hulk, who stood at his side, had a rather gloomy expression on his face.

Leylin pretended not to see this sort of infighting amongst his men’s factions. As long as it didn’t interfere with his or the others’ ability to fight, he didn’t particularly want to intercede.

“Mm, so Cyclops can sort it out. Hulk and Giant, come with me to get rid of the goods and hire some men as well.”

“Alright!” “Yes boss!” Since Leylin had issued the command, everything proceeded as expected.

The main hall of the inn was not as noisy as it had been last night, but there were bits of debris on the ground, and even drunkards on the floor.

“All of you, take this drunkard who can’t pay my money back to the docks. Put him in hard labour, and give him a harsh whipping every day until he pays back his debts. Don’t let him leave until then,” the fox girl boss from yesterday ordered the two barbarians from behind the counter, her hands on her hips.

“Oh, young master! Why have you gotten up so early?” After seeing Leylin, her expression quickly changed. She eyed Karen who was standing to one side, and under her piercing gaze, the elfling couldn’t help but unconsciously shrink back.

“Unless you’re dissatisfied with Karen’s service, in which case I’ll swap her for someone else for you!”

“No, no need. She’s very good,” Leylin scratched his nose, “I still don’t know my lady’s name?”

“Haha, my name is Tillen. You can call me Madam Tillen!” Madam Tillen smiled amorously at Leylin, a smile filled with the charm of a mature woman.

“Mm. Dear Madam Tillen, I want to talk about our transaction, and about this maid’s ransom as well,” Leylin said directly.

“Ransom?” Tillen swept her eyes across Karen, her eyes filled with a special look, “Well, it looks like our Karen has satisfied the young master well...”

Tillen seemed to yawn lazily. “This isn’t the place to talk, follow me!”

She swayed her sinuous hips as she left, leaving behind the strong fragrance of her perfume. Leylin smiled a little before following Her into a small room.

Madam Tillen brewed a floral tea that was said to come from the elves, and waited until white steam had risen before a shrewd expression appeared on her face. “You’ve asked me for my name, young master, but I don’t know how to address you.”

“You can call me Leylin,” Leylin replied with a smile. Since he wanted to form an alliance with her, trust was crucial. She was only asking for his name, which she could have easily found out later with some investigations.

“Alright, young master Leylin!” Madam Tillen crossed her long, slender legs, her fiery fox tail caressing her supple waist.

“I can take charge of the negotiations for the goods, but Karen is a slave of our inn. If it’s to do with her, I don’t have the authority to deal with this matter.”

“I know everything here is the personal property of the Barbarians!” Leylin smiled as he rubbed his hands.

Crackle! A powerful electric current flashed, filling the room with a piercingly bright light.

“Since it’s like this, call the person who can make a decision here.” He followed up in a deep voice, his powerful magic force lingering near his body.

“Wizard! You’re a wizard!” Madam Tillen’s voice grew somewhat shrill, and it was clear that she had not discovered Leylin’s identity.

A noble wizard was very rare in the outer seas. On top of that, Tillen realised that the energy undulations rolling off of Leylin put his strength higher than rank 5. A wizard of that level was a decent adventurer, and could even have a stronger master backing them!

‘A wizard named Leylin... That’s enough for me to find out who he is!’ Unless he used a fake identity, Tillen was certain that Leylin would not be able to escape her information network.

“I never thought that my guest would be such a powerful wizard,” Tillen clasped her hands to her bosom, inadvertently revealing a wide and creamy expanse of her delicate skin.

However, Leylin made very clear the division between business and pleasure, “When is your boss coming over?”

“Don’t be in such a hurry! The latest you’ll meet him will be tonight,” Tillen threw a flirtatious glance, “Before that, our store has many things to pass time with, does my guest care to have a look?”

Chapter 831 - Thieves' Guild

“No need, I still have matters to attend to. I’ll return at night,” Leylin got up to reject her, ignoring Madam Tillen’s resentful expression behind his back.

“Master, where are we going?” Karen stood next to Leylin, as well-behaved as a maid. Although the talks had not even begun, she acted as if she already belonged to him.

Hulk and Giant stood further away like a pair of loyal Imperial bodyguards.

“Call a few over to come with us and recruit the sailors,” Leylin said. Be it the Scarlet Tiger or the merfolk ship, they currently had a severe shortage in sailors. As a result, they needed to recruit a great number of sailors as quickly as possible. Pirates’ Cove would always have plenty of these fellows, one only needed to carefully choose from them.

‘Whips and Whiskey!’ Leylin looked at the tavern’s name rather speechlessly, but still opened the wooden door. Although it was still morning, the tavern was filled with people doing business, as well as many hungover drunkards.

“Boss! We found some people last night, and they’re all waiting here for you!” Giant smiled in his simple manner, suddenly hammering on the surface of the counter. It made all the hanging beer mugs shake chaotically with an ear-splitting sound.

“So it’s you, the fellow from last night! Hurry up and settle your bar tab!” A bleary-eyed old drunkard crawled out from the small door behind the bar, glaring at Giant with disdain. Once he saw Leylin however, his eyes seemed to brighten up considerably.

Perhaps he had seen the beautiful clothes that Leylin wore, and reckoned that this was the golden benefactor who could settle the bad debt.

“Greetings, dear customer!” The old man bowed deeply, smiling until his eyes almost seemed to disappear into his wrinkles.

There was a huge gap in his treatment of Leylin and how he had treated Giant before, but Giant only muttered a few words under his breath, and did not dare to say anything else.

After all, he had tasted Leylin’s methods before.

“What would you like?”

“A glass of rum! The rest of you are free to choose your own!” Leylin waved his hand and sat next to the counter, “Where are the people you found? Call them out and let me have a look at them.”

His standards were not too high at the moment, and ordinary pirates would suffice. Death would help him select the cream of the crop.

“Wait, boss!” Giant scratched his head, and rushed to gap

between a few sofas like a hurricane, and began to beat the sofas up with kicks and punches. Loud curses could be heard from inside the sofas.

After a few seconds, over ten badly battered pirates with swollen faces and bleeding noses were driven out by Giant. Although they were wounded, these pirates had a rather lively temperament, which was beyond Leylin's expectations.

"Giant, are these the people you fought with last night?" Leylin suddenly had a premonition.

"That's right, boss!" Giant laughed in his simple manner, "These fellows are pretty tough, and they can hold their own against my beatings. I think they would do well in the battle squadron..."

Giant's gifted strength was already on the level of a rank 5 Warrior, and he would not do badly against rank 6 or rank 7 Warriors either. For him to give this evaluation, the men must be rather powerful themselves.

At that point, they also knew that Leylin might become their employer, and they looked uneasily at the big fellow standing in the middle amongst them.

"Mm? What's your name?" Leylin looked at the fellow that was obviously their leader. He had a bearded face, and a pair of eyes that looked half-asleep, which glimmered with intelligence from time to time.

“This is a fellow with a lot of stories to tell!” Leylin judged him on his very first glance.

“Ronald! My name is Ronald, my lord!” His tone of voice was very respectful and decorous, and he even seemed to have learnt a little noble etiquette.

“Can you read?” This sort of subtle distinction aroused Leylin’s interest.

“I previously spent some time in the Tillen scholars’ family learning how to write,” Ronald was very humble, and although they had only just met, he had immediately realised that Leylin was not an ordinary youth.

Not only could he subdue a subordinate like Giant, his temperament was different.

Only a life of abundance, and a long period of etiquette and culture lessons could nurture such an awe-inspiring presence, and an air of nobility.

In these times, a man like him represented hope!

“Very good! Ronald, are you willing to swear loyalty to me?” Leylin smiled, requesting loyalty rather than employment. This was clearly the invitation of a noble, and Ronald was stunned by it.

He was only startled for a short moment however. Ronald

clenched his teeth and asked, “I want to ask my lord if you’re part of the Louis family? If so, then please forgive me, as it would be difficult for me to agree!”

“Why is that? Are they your enemies?” Leylin asked with great interest. He immediately saw a trace of hatred within Ronald’s eyes.

This complex change in emotion surfaced only for a moment, but it could not be concealed from Leylin’s gaze.

“Yes,” Ronald clenched his teeth and took a gamble. After all, if Leylin was a young master from the Louis family, then this situation would not end well for him.

At this moment, the atmosphere became rather delicate. The ten pirates next to Ronald glared at Leylin and his men, as if they were ready to leap into action if the response was unfavourable.

The boss of this place had long hid under the counter, and was obviously experienced with these abnormal situations.

“Haha... Haha...” Just when the atmosphere grew so tense that time almost came to standstill, Leylin suddenly laughed. His rippling laughter disrupted the heavy atmosphere, just like a rock being thrown into still water.

“I’m not one of Marquis Louis’ cronies. On the contrary, my family has a grudge against him,” Leylin spoke slowly, “After all,

even if the Marquis needed men, it would be impossible for him to come and recruit here in the Pirates' Cove, wouldn't it?"

"Then, this Ronald is willing to accept your employment, my lord!" He skillfully answered Leylin's previous question, and clearly did not put any heart into his reply. However, that was normal.

Leylin was not brain-dead enough to think that once he exuded his oppressing aura as a hero, subordinates would come running over to worship him.

Perhaps only after he had lead Ronald to begin taking action against Marquis Louis, would he be able to obtain true loyalty from him. Only once he had destroyed Marquis Louis would Ronald be willing to die for him.

'However, having this sort of effect at the beginning is already good!'

"Very well, from now on you will be a sailor on the Scarlet Tiger ship. Ronald, you are my second officer!" Since there were many available positions now, he needed to fill the gaps quickly.

"Haha... This fellow, welcome to the family! Boss, bring the rum!" Giant firmly slapped Ronald's back, making him stumble.

"No problem!" The boss who had previously hid under the counter immediately stretched out his hand, a cunning expression

on his face, “Only... Shouldn’t you clear your bar tab before you continue drinking? Since you’ve already been hired by someone, doesn’t that mean you’ll have money very soon? Poor old Fade can’t stay afloat any longer...”

After he finished, he even winked at Leylin several times and squeezed out a few drops of crocodile tears.

After he heard this, Ronald and the others bowed their heads, and their faces flushed in shame.

‘It looks like these people all didn’t have enough to pay their bill, and were locked up here last night,’ Leylin grudgingly sighed.

“Tell me! How much money do they owe you?”

After walking out of the bar, the group of men behind Leylin’s back still looked rather ashamed.

“I’ve given you the criteria of the men I’d like to recruit, so now it’s up to you to recruit people. I need 100 men!” Leylin said to Hulk, after they had walked for a while.

“Don’t worry, my lord!” As a guard of the Faulen family, Hulk’s loyalty towards Leylin was very strong.

“Mm, go and attend to your business. There’s no need to follow me,” Leylin waved his hand to dismiss the others behind him.

“Master!” Karen followed behind Leylin with a worried expression on her face.

“Don’t worry, once I make a promise, there is no way that it won’t be fulfilled,” Leylin said in a gentle voice, but Karen involuntarily trembled.

“Alright. Please be careful, Pirates’ Cove is extremely chaotic...”

“Mm, I know,” Leylin nodded, disappeared into an alley on the side of the street.

Pirates’ Cove had a complex labyrinth of back alleys, and each one could allow only one person to pass. It was obviously crowded and chaotic and the floor was filled with slop and filthy things, making it smell absolutely awful.

However, Leylin’s gaze was fixed on a unique symbol in a corner of the alleyway. It was a symbol of two crossed daggers, which faintly pointed towards a certain direction.

“The Thieves’ Guild!” Leylin smiled, and immediately walked in the direction that the daggers were pointing to.

In the World of Gods, more and more people were able to advance into a profession. However, the one’s that attracted the most attention and had endured the longest were the three guilds—the Thieves’ Guild, the Warriors’ Guild and Wizards’ Guild!

These three guilds would frequently issue missions, which would bring great benefits to adventurer groups.

In the World of Gods, the number of shrines and whether the three major guilds were hosted there, was a major indicator of the prosperity of a city.

Pirates' Cove naturally did not host the Wizards' Guild, but Leylin had seen the Warriors' Guild as their symbol had been very striking.

The Thieves' Guild was an enormous organisation which had been secretly hidden in the dark, and their missions tended towards secrecy. Most of them were requests for assassinations or theft.

However, it was this dark network that seemed to permeate the entire continent, and rumour had it that they had the blessings of many gods.

Yes, the three great guilds each had the backing of more than one god!

Chapter 832 - Underground

As he walked in the direction that the daggers pointed, his surroundings became increasingly remote. The liveliness of Pirates' Cove was gradually left behind, and Leylin began to feel a pervasive sense of eeriness and desolation.

This feeling grew even more obvious after he walked down a flight of stone stairs. The terrifying senses of wizards allowed him to notice that there were three pairs of eyes spying on him in the shadows.

“It really feels like I’m walking down to hell!” Leylin chuckled. The sun was covered by vast dark clouds, projecting tremendous shadows.

He pressed his palm onto a gray rock covered in moss, and a gap immediately appeared in a wall nearby. He did not hesitate as he quickly ducked into the gap, simultaneously feeling many astonished gazes directed at him.

There was a very short path behind the wall, and at its end was a wooden door with an iron ring.

Thump! Thump! Leylin used the ring to knock loudly on the door, and it let out a distant sound.

The door creaked open slightly, revealing the face of an old man holding an oil lamp. He had practically no facial muscles anymore, looking like a withered corpse under the flickering light of the

lamp. His two eyes looked dazed, the eyeballs completely motionless.

“The night is always lonely,” The old man said in a hoarse voice, as if he had not spoken for a long time.

“For those who are seeking brightness and hope!” Leylin smiled slightly, a dagger flying into his hand and beginning to dance through the air as elaborately as a butterfly.

The old man gave Leylin a probing look and opened the wooden door, “Come in, brother from the Underdark!”

With the light from his oil lamp, Leylin could see a deep and pitch-black passageway that seemed to go all the way to the core of the earth. A distant sound increased in volume as he made his way across it, until it turned into what seemed like a market bustling with life.

Pak! Two enormous gates opened, revealing an even more expansive underground world.

What entered his sights was a hall formed from a deep cave, with sinkholes in the floor and underground streams trailing off to numerous others. People from all walks of life populated this area, most strangely covering their faces with shrouds. Only pairs of vigilant eyes were revealed.

In the distance were a few wooden constructions and a large

announcement board towering ahead. Below were many masked people gesticulating at it. While they tried to lower their volume, the sounds of discussion from the whole crowd joined to form a buzz.

“Welcome to the Thieves’ Guild! Is this your first time, kid?” A slender and tall person like a bamboo stick closed in, trying his best to create a stiff smile, “Need a guide? I...”

“No!” Leylin rejected resolutely.

This was the dark world of Pirates’ Cove. How could there be good people here? Even if one looked to hire people, just showing the slightest of weaknesses would cause these people to pounce on you like wild wolves, dividing everything amongst themselves after murdering you.

“Mister... I...”

“Scram!” Leylin glared at him, and the murderous aura born of indiscriminate slaughter forced the man several steps back.

Having killed people meant nothing. Everyone here had the blood of at least one or two people on their hands themselves, but Leylin’s own murderous aura was far more powerful than that. It was that of someone who’s truly honed themselves on a bloody battlefield, not someone to be trifled with.

An important part of being a thief was knowing oneself well. The

slender bamboo stick of a man laughed awkwardly and disappeared into the darkness. He had a feeling that if he were to continue staying here, what happened next would be something he would regret.

“Is this darkness...” Feeling the blood and violence lingering in the air, as well as the pure malicious intent, Leylin revealed a nostalgic look. He was originally a dark Magus after all.

He ran his eyes over his surroundings casually, and began to head towards the large announcement board. The thing seemed to grow bigger the closer he got, until it was the size of a small hill.

Numerous enchanted words flickered on it; just maintaining this effect would require at least tens of gold coins everyday. The extravagance caused Leylin to nod to himself.

‘Mission: Track down whereabouts of a batch of silk cloth!’

‘Mission: Investigate reason and happenings for the fall of the Half Merfolk Island!’

‘Mission: Assassinate Viscount Lorraine’s wife!’

‘Selling information: The recent shipping route of the cargo ships of the Heigel chamber of commerce!’

‘Selling recipe for poison: Tears of Molin! Interested parties must come for a face-to-face meeting!’

All sorts of information and news flickered on the announcement board. The missions for investigation and assassination caused Leylin to let out an involuntary sound of surprise, 'I didn't expect news of Half Merfolk Island to travel here so quickly, and... Missions for the assassination of nobility put out here in public...'

The only impression that Leylin got was that as long as money was involved, these assassins could do anything. He gazed steadily at the board as the A.I. Chip rapidly scanned everything, collating the information on all these missions into one system.

While it was only the names of the mission, Leylin grew to understand the outer seas better from it.

'Crimes and chaos... I like it...' Though he only saw a corner of this dark world, Leylin knew that things were definitely not all quiet and tranquil in the region.

Many rebellious powers lay low in the shadows, preparing to deal Marquis Louis a fatal blow at any time. This would completely destroy the market dominance that the Baltic archipelago enjoyed, allowing them to plunder the riches and resources there!

Once the A.I. Chip showed a prompt that it had recorded all the information, Leylin walked straight to the wooden house at the back.

Many roads immediately showed up like a dense cobweb. Some fellows with dangerous auras occasionally appeared in Leylin's

senses, but there was only a very fuzzy image of them there.

‘This feeling... Is it a protective layer due to some divine force? In addition, this seems to be from a god I know well...’ Leylin snickered and strode inside.

Pila! The void was torn open at this moment, and an icy glint of steel was aimed straight at Leylin’s neck like a poisonous snake’s tongue.

The rank of this assassin seemed to be rather high, and he had almost escaped Leylin’s senses. It was only at the moment of the other party’s attack, that instant when their murderous intent surged out, that Leylin located them.

‘Mage Armour! Fragile Barrier!’ Two layers of protective spells immediately appeared with a thought.

But at the same time, he saw an icy look in the assassin’s eyes. The rays of light from a divine spell shone out.

Dispel Magic! Under the glittering light, Leylin’s protective spells instantly crumbled, revealing his astonished gaze. The dagger in the assassin’s hand ruthlessly swiped at his neck, and he evidently would not stop until it was all over.

Most wizards would need a period of time to recover their senses and contact the Weave after being hit with Dispel Magic. This slight moment would be enough for the assassin to carve Leylin

into multiple pieces. After all, a wizard that had lost all ability to cast spells was just a regular human.

[Beep! Host affected by divine spell, suffering a temporary loss of ability to sense level 2 and 3 Weave. Countdown: 5 seconds!]

The A.I. Chip's prompt arrived in that instant, but strangely enough, there was no mention of the level 0 and 1 Weave. Leylin could sense that his ability to use that still existed.

'I see. So after I complete the analysis of the Weave, I'm immune to isolating skills?' Leylin could now cast rank 0 and 1 spells in an instant, drowning this assassin. However, he immediately gave this idea up.

An ability that was too unexpected would give rise to suspicions, which was not beneficial to him at the moment.

'Since it can seal the magic abilities I have, then...' A magic scroll instantly appeared in his hands, emitting terrifying light.

"A rank 4 spell!" The assassin produced a sharp cry. Meanwhile, he could feel his dagger piercing into what seemed to be the most solid granite, unable to penetrate through it even by an inch.

"Rank 4 magic, Stone Skin! You despicable maggot, you even

made me use such a precious scroll!” Leylin feigned fury as he was completely covered by a layer of stone skin, as if he now wore armour of stone. This was Stone Skin, a rank 4 spell. Its defensive power was outstanding even among other spells of its kind.

This scroll was something that Ernest had given Leylin while he had still been in the manor just in case. He hadn’t used it during the previous times of danger, but he’d done so now.

This was a rank 4 magic scroll! Even if its value wasn’t enough to equal that of a city, it was very precious, and the fury on Leylin’s face was understandable.

“You should not have come here!” The assassin’s voice was hoarse as he hurriedly retreated.

“Trying to leave now?” Leylin’s expression was filled with fury as he swung his fist.

Thud! The tip of the dagger was broken off by the stone fist, but it did not stop there. It crashed into the assassin’s body with great power.

Crack! A layer of his defence was destroyed, and the assassin’s body was sent flying backwards, the imprint of a fist clear on his chest.

“Never... Never has someone been able to treat me this way. I will kill you...” The assassin pulled his mask down, revealing a

sullen face, with blood trickling from the corner of his mouth.

“Let’s see who dies first!” Leylin strode closer, a murderous aura apparent on his face.

“Esteemed guest, please forgive him!” At some point, a figure dressed entirely in a black robe came to the centre, a streak of divine force flying to the assassin’s body.

Under the light, the assassin’s wounds healed at a startling rate.

“Cure Serious Wounds! A rank 3 divine spell!” Leylin’s eyes narrowed as he saw the emblem on the other party’s chest.

Chapter 833 - Conference

“A priest of Cyric?” Leylin stepped backwards, “Since this is what the God of Murder’s pries wants, then I’ll forget it...” He had no plans of killing people here, he was in their territory after all.

“Lord Priest, please let me...” At this moment, the assassin on the ground began to crawl, eyes full of hatred for Leylin.

“Enough, fall back!” The voice yelled at the assassin without favouritism, causing him to freeze.

“You just wait!” The assassin glared at Leylin, drawing a finger across his neck before disappearing into thin air.

“Hehe... Little Cly was far too reckless and impulsive. Esteemed guest, please come with me!” The priest politely gestured at Leylin to move on. Leylin rubbed his nose and walked with him.

.....

Leylin left a long while later, having acquired what he needed. This priest then turned here and there in the underground world, and finally left the Thieves’ Guild and arrived in a secret room.

The flames around them flickered sinisterly. At the very centre of the place was a shrine to the God of Murder.

In front of the figure was an old man with wrinkles all over his face, praying as powerful divine force rippled forth from his body.

“Lord Bishop!” The priest from before bowed respectfully.

“Is that person gone already?” The old bishop opened his hazy eyes. They somehow held a lustre that could see through one’s intentions.

“Yes, he has already left. He bought a lot information regarding Marquis Louis!” The priest did not dare conceal anything, and stated all of Leylin’s activities.

“I saw it. He will be the source of chaos in the future. His many murders and the chaos he brings will definitely bring joy to our master!” The bishop muttered.

“Then what should we do? Help him?” The priest asked, confused.

“There’s no need for that... Keke... Just be neutral. If required, he will definitely seek our help...” Lord Bishop snickered, “In addition, gift the news of him coming here to the Barbarians. Also, warn Cly not to interfere with the Master’s great work just because of a brother’s death, or I will put him on trial...”

The God of Murder’s punishment was notoriously brutal, and even this priest began to tremble in fear once it was mentioned.

“I understand! Our Master’s glory will definitely spread across the lands!” The priest said a prayer, and then left respectfully...

‘The God of Murder? How interesting!’ Leylin evidently realised that today’s incident had to do with the wave of assassins he’d faced before.

However, assassins were people who worked for money. Mahnke might have sided with Marquis Louis at the beginning or had been hired by him, but he had already been turned into a pile of bones. Leylin could not be bothered with him. Rather, a high-ranked assassin like Cly was a threat he could not ignore.

“Seems like this Thieves’ Guild is neutral. It’s under the rule of the Barbarians, but also has connections with Marquis Louis...” Leylin smiled grimly.

Churches always saw things from their own point of view, the conflicts of mortals transient like fleeting clouds. As long as their own rule wasn’t affected, they didn’t care about the king. It was so with the church of knowledge, as well with the church of murder.

‘The exploration of the sea started recently, but the place has already entered the sights of the gods. I need to step up my plans...’ Leylin’s expression could not help but darken, but after he returned to the inn he had calmed down, not revealing any hint of what he’d felt before.

“Boss!” Giant and Hulk stood up in the inn’s main hall, accompanied by the tens of pirates they’d brought. Ronald was

also there amongst them.

“Mm!” Leylin’s eyes swept through this group of pirates. All who met his gaze felt a piercing feeling in their eye, and had no choice but to lower their heads.

“Tell them that I’ll get the bill for the roasted meat and rum over these few days!” It had to be said that Leylin had a pretty good impression of these people. At the very least, these pirates were more ferocious than the rest.

Of course, that was the extent of it. It wasn’t easy to recruit Professionals at or above the middle grades.

“Master, Madam Tillen has invited you to the back!” Karen noiselessly appeared behind Leylin, her footsteps incredibly light like those of a seasoned thief. She no longer showed any signs of her previous weakness.

“Has the poison from your body been removed?” Blue light flashed as Leylin asked in surprise. He only needed a bit of effort to obtain a cure for Karen’s poison, but Madam Tillen had already taken care of it. It showed her favourable attitude.

After all, she had the Barbarians backing her. It was currently the only organisation that could contend against Marquis Louis in the outer seas.

“Yes! She’s already removed my slave contract. Henceforth, I

serve under you, Master!” Karen had already removed that maid uniform that gave rise to wild thoughts. She was now clad in black leather attire, a black leather holster for her dagger on her thighs that were as thick as ivory. It made her seem even more gallant.

“Good. Lead me there!” Leylin knew that Madam Tillen had already reported everything about him to the Barbarians, she was a part of them after all. They were now looking for him to lay all their cards on the table.

It was the same room as it had been in the morning, though there was now another giant in there.

This was a barbarian with green skin, sitting on the large sofa nonchalantly and with a great aura to him. The floorboards beneath him had slightly sunken under his heavy weight. He wore a cow-horn helmet made of wrought iron, and revealed a fine and solid upper body. His fierce looks were coupled with a pair of shrewd eyes.

At his right hand was an [exotic saber](#) at a position from which it could be brandished most easily. Its sharp edge held a magic glow to it, evidently a result of it being enchanted by an alchemist.

a single long broad blade, and a long handle suitable for two-handed use. Dating from Emperor Cheng of Han, made to slice through horse’s legs (hence the literal translation of the term, Horse Beheading Sword)

“Hehe... the young master of the Faulen Family!” Madam Tillen now sat on the thigh of the barbarian, beaming up at Leylin.

Her fiery-red tail brushed against the barbarian from time to time, giving off an untameable feeling that was very tempting.

The two sat together, and Leylin suddenly had a bizarre feeling that this was rather similar to 'Beauty and the Beast', but Madam Tillen did not seem to think so. Her eyes were full of love as she stared into his eyes.

“Hehe... I never thought that young master Leylin, the heir of a Baron, would become a pirate!” Madam Tillen now sized Leylin up and down, eyes emanating a beautiful luster, “That’s not all. I’ve heard about young master’s talent in magic that even makes your mentor feel ashamed of himself. How extraordinary...”

In just a few sentences, she’d revealed that she now had all the information regarding the current Leylin.

“And so? Nobles will never admit it, and I obviously won’t!” Leylin chuckled and sat on the sofa on the opposite side. Karen stood behind him, her body involuntarily trembling as if it had evoked some past trauma.

The Barbarians would’ve been too stupid to hold influence over the outer seas if they couldn’t find information on him given his name and the fact that he was a wizard. The sincerity was a requirement of an alliance.

“Nice! Young master Leylin’s words are completely different from those dignified nobles,” Madam Tillen’s tone seemed to

conceal some hatred, “They appear to be openhearted and benevolent, but in reality they’re worse than beasts...”

The barbarian warrior did not utter a single word all this time, but the pressure he gave off made him seem like a mountain, constantly attacking Leylin.

“This is...?” Leylin asked Madam Tillen bluntly.

“Oh, look at me!” Madam Tillen patted at her bright forehead and gave him a flirty look, “Let me introduce. This is Ogde Battlehammer, my lover! He’s also the captain of the Barbarians!”

As she introduced him, Leylin’s eyes flickered. The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded, and part of the information was projected before him.

[Name: Ogde Battlehammer. Race: Barbarian. Strength: 15+. Agility: 10. Vitality: 10. Spirit: 9. A warrior above rank 15, extremely dangerous!]

Beside the numbers was a 3D image of him, including the magic saber. Just from the image, Leylin could tell that he had numerous magic items on him.

‘A high-ranked warrior above rank 15, with a bonus in strength as a barbarian! Even on the continent, this strength would bring him

fame. Even if it's the Marquis, with help from the barbarian race, Ogde should not be on the losing end in a battle against the Marquis.'

Leylin found that he had to recalculate the strength Marquis Louis had. In the World of Gods, Professionals between ranks 5 and 10 were elites. Those above rank 10 were great in their own right, and as for rank 15s and above, they were respected throughout the kingdoms and treated very well.

However, even a high-ranked warrior like that, with the power of his whole race on his side, was on the losing end against Marquis Louis. How powerful was the noble? At this moment, Leylin felt lucky that he'd left immediately after taking care of Half Merfolk Island.

As these thoughts flashed past, Leylin nodded at this high-ranked barbarian captain, "Nice to meet you, revered exemplary!"

Comprehend Languages flashed, allowing Leylin to understand what the Barbarian meant.

Chapter 834 - Alliance

“Foreign wizard! I can sense an aura emitting from you, that only clan priests possess!” The high-level barbarian warrior, Odge, had his eyes fixated on Leylin’s hands, “In addition, you’re also a soldier worth respecting!”

His astonishing sharpness allowed him to sense Leylin’s accomplishments as a warrior.

“Then... Speak your purpose in coming here!” After Odge spoke, the fox lady Madam Tillen immediately stood obediently as the side, as though she was a maid showing respect.

Leylin took a deep breath, then said his request, “I would like to join forces with the Barbarians’ to attack the Baltic archipelago!”

“Are you crazy, young lad?” Even the fox woman couldn’t listen to such a fantastical plan. She stood up as her chest heaved violently, “Do you know how many Professionals Marquis Louis has under him? You actually want to rope us in as his enemy? Don’t think we’ll think highly of you because you exterminated the Black Tigers and Half Merfolk Island. Wait till you’ve gotten rid of the Black Skeletons or Tigershark Pirates, before saying that again!”

“But... you’re ALREADY enemies with the Marquis. I’m just offering a helping hand, am I not?” Leylin shrugged his shoulders and said with a smile.

“Good lord! To think that I actually know a chap like you who doesn’t understand the complexity of the situation...” Madam Tillen was so furious that her entire body started to tremble, and she was close to chasing him away immediately.

But at this very moment, an enormously powerful pair of hands stopped Tillen from taking action. “Let him continue!”

“Odge... You...” The fox lady turned around and saw the interested expression in the barbarian’s eyes.

“The enemy of our enemy is our friend!” Leylin smiled and spoke frankly with assurance. “Not only can the Faulens offer you support as a noble family, I am also a wizard, with a formidable tutor as my backing.”

The power of magic was the eternal sorrow of these barbarians. Odge’s expression changed greatly in response. Even though there were a few barbarian priests who had inherited magical abilities, they were always at a disadvantage compared to human wizards.

Upon seeing this, Leylin became more confident. “I presume... that you also know how powerful magic can be, right?”

“Yes, we will require the assistance of formidable magical power to aid us in defeating Boruj!” The Barbarian Warlock nodded.

“Boruj... Is that the chief wizard of Louis’ family?” Leylin quickly recalled the information he had purchased at the Thieves’ Guild.

“That’s right! I can tell you for definite that he’s a high level wizard above rank 15! Without him, if they relied only on Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates, I’d have ripped those two pirate crews into shreds a long time ago...”

“A wizard above rank 15!” Leylin exhaled deeply. Such high level wizards often had great mastery over powerful plane transmission spells and life spells, which made killing them exceptionally difficult.

“Such wizards are probably few and far between even in the Dambrath Kingdom, right? Why would he agree to work under Marquis Louis?”

If it was him that was the marquis of the empire, there would still be a possibility of attracting a high-level wizard to work for him. But Marquis Louis evidently didn’t have this qualification. In the entire Dambrath Kingdom, the only person who had the ability to recruit a high-level wizard would only be His Majesty.

“As a matter of fact, I know a little about this...” Seeing that Odge didn’t reject the alliance, and even appeared to admire Leylin, Madam Tillen took a deep breath, no longer looking down on Leylin.

“According to my intelligence reports, that marquis apparently promised to build him a wizard tower, and used this to pay for the wizard’s assistance...”

“We absolutely must not let him successfully build a wizard tower!” Without waiting for Madam Tillen complete her sentence, Leylin had already made up his mind. Even it was a wizard tower of the lowest standards, the amount of wealth required was astronomical. Two million gold coins was the most basic requirement, and they had to be kronas.

With such a huge temptation, it was no wonder that Boruj would cast himself as one of Marquis Louis’ subordinates. It was also not surprising that his table manners were [exceptionally unsightly](#), as he was a person who wanted any kind of benefits.

Acting tastelessly and greedily

But the more it was so, the more Leylin wanted to destroy their alliance.

No one else understood the terror of a wizard tower more clearly than a wizard himself. A low-ranking wizard tower was equivalent to a rank 15 wizard, the sort that did not need to rest day or night, with boundless energy. Once he successfully constructed his wizard tower, the entire Baltic archipelago would be so sturdy that it would be impenetrable under Boruj’s supervision.

With the wizard tower, not only would Boruj take a step forwards to advancement, it also meant that he could groom a steady flow of wizard apprentices!

It only took a few reminders from Leylin before Odge’s eyes shone with resolution.

“But... According to our intelligence reports, Marquis Louis is already secretly buying mithril and refined gold in bulk, and they even increased the intensity of their slavers’ fleet. He even sent people to the mainland to acquire high-grade construction blueprints...”

“The more he moves forward, the more we cannot let them succeed, or else his will be the only voice in the outer sea in the future!” Leylin’s expression was serious, “I’ll incessantly raid his shipping routes from now, I’ll need your cooperation for intelligence reports and to fence stolen goods.”

Hearing Leylin’s simple yet crude plan, Madam Tillen had a rather thoughtful expression on her face. What he offered was something the Barbarians themselves could not do.

Were they to do such a thing, it would mean the start of a war! The Marquis’ powerful fleet of ships would arrive at Pirates’ Cove in the blink of an eye, but it was different for Leylin. He was executing this in private, but still had the identity of a noble on the surface.

Even Marquis Louis would not dare to commit the heinous crime of attacking another noble family’s territory without any evidence. Besides, only a wizard like himself would be able to avoid the detection and predictive spells of the wizard working under Louis.

As for dispatching pirates and the like, did he think the other nobles were fools? There was a church on Faulen Island as well.

As long as the high-level wizard Boruj was not around, Leylin dared to join up with the Barbarians, and make sure that Boruj would walk the path of no return.

Many thoughts passed through the barbarian's mind. One should not be baffled by his appearance; although he was a barbarian, his ability to hold the throne of leadership showed that he was no simple character.

Moreover, no matter how he looked at it, the one taking the risk would be Leylin and his family. There wouldn't be any gains or losses on his part. This was what Leylin had planned long ago, and it would soon bring sorrow to his weaker opponents.

“Madam!” At this instant, there was a light knock on the door.

“What's the matter? Didn't I say before that you can't approach the lord if there isn't anything important?” Madam Tillen scowled, but continued to swing her hips as she opened the door by a small crack.

“Madam!” A maid with extremely clever eyes lowered her head and secretly scanned her surroundings, before whispering something in Madam Tillen's ear.

After closing the door, Madam Tillen returned to her seat. She looked at Leylin oddly. Her facial expression changed a few times, before she leaned forward on Odge's shoulder and said a few words to him.

“You’re good!” Odge gave Leylin a profound look. He then whispered urgently and hastily in Madam Tillen’s ear.

A high-ranking warrior of Odge’s level could already manifest their qi into the external environment. Isolating an area from detection was simply a piece of cake for him, and even Leylin couldn’t hear anything they were discussing.

“Alright! Our chief has agreed to form an alliance with you, and even share our intelligence reports and the channel where we dispose our stolen goods with you!”

Madam Tillen grudgingly shot a bitter glance at Leylin, as though he had gotten some huge advantage, “However, we want half of the benefits of your profits every round!”

“Ten percent at most, or else I will not be able to pay my subordinates!”

Once they were back to this matter, Madam Tillen seemed to have returned to being that shrewd wife. Leylin couldn’t give them his benefits just based on a few sentences she uttered, and they settled on the criterion of thirty percent in the end.

Since the leaders of both parties had already confirmed their inclination towards a collaboration, the rest of the matters could be settled by their subordinates. Odge stood up, causing a slight tremor in the process.

“Nobleman from the outer seas, wizard Leylin! Are you my friend?”

“Of course. May our friendship last for a long time, and even carry over to our descendants!” Leylin solemnly made a promise.

Thump! Two fists, one large and one small, collided, producing a light crack. This was a contract of their alliance and a pledge between men.

Of course, how long this would be maintained was a question that Leylin found hard to confront. However, before the fall of Marquis Louis’ influence, their relationship as allies would be relatively solid.

After Odge left, the fox lady moved next to Leylin. Her petite frame which could light up a fire in most men was almost completely leaning against his body as she said in a feminine voice in his ear, “Hehe... Odge seems to like you very much?”

“My apologies, Madam! It’s about time for me to leave!” Leylin pushed her away courteously and got up to take his leave.

Hearing his words, a trace of disappointment flashed across her eyes, although it wasn’t clear if it was genuine or false. “Your behaviour really does deeply wound me! However, elder sister still has two gifts for you!”

“Karen! You belong to Mr Leylin from now on. You need to

satisfy all of his demands, understand?”

“Understood, Madam!” Karen agreed like it was a conditioned reflex, before a hint of shame and fury flashed across her face, as though she had come to a realisation.

Although he was fully aware that Madam Tillen was being generous, at least she had gotten the approval of the barbarian, or else she definitely wouldn’t have dared to free Karen of her imprisonment. Leylin thanked her anyway.

[Previous Chapter](#)

[Next Chapter](#)

1. Acting tastelessly and greedily ↩

Chapter 835 - Establishing Might

“And the other gift?” Leylin looked at the appealing fox lady in front of him. There was a glimmer of anticipation on his face like that of a little boy-next-door.

Such an attitude made Madam Tillen blush instantly, and her heart almost could not take it, “Although I know perfectly well that you’re just putting on an act, I still was nearly captivated by you...”

Tillen swayed her hips. Her fiery-red fox tail drifting gently with the wind, “The second one is an intelligence report. It’s about the God of Murder’s church.”

Leylin’s expression turned solemn as he listened carefully.

.....

After several days, the Scarlet Tiger had been repaired at the pier of Pirates’ Cove. The blood-red flag with the skull and dagger motif fluttered in the wind.

The damage to the ship’s hull had been completely mended, the bottom of the ship polished, and even the bow of the ship had been replaced. The entire ship seemed to have been given new life, making Leylin feel deeply moved and feeling that his gold coins had been well-spent.

Now, Leylin was standing at the front of the deck with his hands behind his back, looking down at more than a hundred pirates.

These men were all recruited at Pirates' Cove, and would make up the members in his future pirate crew.

Although Hulk and Giant had diligently attended to the matter, Leylin still had a glimmer of dissatisfaction due to the short period of time they had.

It could not be said that he was discontented with these pirates below him. It would be a wonder if these stubborn and unruly pirates submitted immediately upon discovering that their boss was a youngster. Thus, Leylin was not upset about that. What made him unhappy was how weak these pirates were.

The number of Professionals were so low that it could be counted with his fingers, and not a single one was above rank 5. Ronaldo's group was already considered the cream of the crop, but they had at least seen bloodshed before, so they wouldn't be lenient during a battle.

Furthermore, the few who had pretty decent strength seemed to be up to no good. They didn't even have the inclination to lay low for a while, which made Leylin shake his head inwardly.

'Forget it, an elite pirate crew isn't made in one or two days. Hulk and Giant have done quite well.'

Leylin sighed secretly, then stood in front of everyone, “I am the captain of the Scarlet Tiger and will be your captain in the future. Does anyone have anything to say?”

He roared loudly all of a sudden, and his voice even made the pirates’ eardrums hurt, “I know many among you are unwilling to obey me.”

Leylin slowly ran his eyes through the crowd, seemingly able to read every single pirate’s heart, “Some of you have your eyes on the handsome pay. Others are here purely to have some fun. Furthermore, some of you, perhaps, simply harbor prohibited thoughts and wish to kill me and seize control of the boat at sea.”

An uproar came from the pirates below, but Leylin’s voice was loud enough to repress it.

“But it doesn’t matter, I can put all that aside. However, if you disobey my orders on the ship, or are unable to complete even my most basic requests, I will wring your brain out and stuff it up your anus. Do you understand?”

This arrogant threat immediately created a commotion among many of the pirates. Even Ronaldo was slightly displeased.

“Ya tender white swine! How dare ye speak to adults like that! Be a good lil’ boy and run back to yer mommy’s bosom to drink her milk!”

A jarring voice sounded from the crowd and hoots of laughter instantly erupted.

“Stop hidin’, Damphair Aeron. I can see ye. Get out here!” Giant and Hulk were rather furious.

“Hey! Hey! Mateys! Are we gin’ let a mischievous imp climb over our heads?” The crowd parted. A pirate with a fake eye and yellowing teeth walked out with more than a dozen men behind him.

“Browntooth Torworld, Pinchface Jon Myre, Red Oarsman Lucas Codd, Quellon Humble...” Giant’s expression grew worse as these names were called out one by one.

These were all famous pirates. Most of them worked alone, but they still were forces to be reckoned with.

Moreover, they had great popularity among the various pirates. Even Cyclops felt that this wouldn’t be easy to settle.

“Finally, you appear.” Leylin shook his head, “Then what do you plan on doing? Don’t forget we are still at the pier.”

Leylin was speechless regarding how those few had appeared all of a sudden. Even if they were just being compliant on the surface, but were secretly conspiring to seize control of the authority, Leylin could still use them temporarily for a period of time. It was better than disposing of them immediately.

“Nothin’, respectable young master!” Aeron snarled, making his yellowing teeth even more conspicuous, “I’m just hopin’ that young master can appoint me and these mateys as assistants onboard. This way, we’ll be able to pass on a portion of the benefits to ye. A person with such honorable status like yourself can refrain from headin’ out to sea and takin’ risks. Ain’t that reasonable?”

“Is this what all of you think too?” Leylin looked down at the newly recruited pirates.

At this point, even Giant, the most slow-witted of them all, understood that they were plotting to seize control. He immediately stood behind Leylin, along with Cyclops and the other older pirates. Their gazes were filled with pity.

Based on what they knew of Leylin, they instantly predicted that this was the beginning of a show of force and massacre.

The majority of the pirates lowered their heads, but a few jeered rowdily. The crowd still showed tacit approval on the whole.

The loyalty of pirates was as chaste as prostitutes.

“Aeron! You’re too much!” Ronald stood apart together with his brothers, drawing the boundaries with him.

“A silent majority, and a handful of rebellious people?” Leylin

laughed while looking at Aeron, who seemed to be at a loss of what to do. His eyes were filled with panic.

Upon seeing Ronald step out, he evidently understood that the situation had escalated to a point where it would be difficult to tell what would happen.

At first, they had more than a dozen brothers that were not inferior to Leylin's men. While the remaining newly recruited pirates wouldn't have helped an outsider.

But now, the tables had turned. Since Ronald decided to defect while bringing some people along, the tides turned immediately. The number of people in Leylin's team rapidly increased, which intimidated majority of the remaining pirates.

Aeron deeply understood that, with his reputation, it was possible to get some of these pirates to fight for him. However, it would be impossible for Ronald to fight for Aeron as if his life depended on it.

"Damn it Ronald, ye made me lose such a huge juicy sheep! Watch out!" Aeron cursed and moved to leave with his subordinates. Death, however, was already knocking on his door. A nimble black silhouette suddenly appeared out of thin air.

"Shadow Stealth!" The figure that had appeared was an assassin. Her dagger slashed an elegant arc across his neck.

Assassin skill— Cutthroat!

A great amount of fresh blood splurged out. Aeron covered his throat with both hands, and struggled as he collapsed on the floor. His death was quick.

“Anyone with the audacity to offend my master, will die.” Karen stood behind Leylin, wielding the dagger.

After the poison was expelled from her body, Karen finally returned to her original strength as a rank 5 assassin, which immediately intimidated a few people.

Now, she faced these pirates with the blade of vengeance.

“A rank 5 assassin! Mateys, charge! Avenge Aeron!” A red-haired pirate, who had been standing behind Aeron, immediately yelled out as a layer of qi burst forth from his body.

“Don’t move, all of you!” Leylin raised his hands and stopped his subordinates from causing trouble.

“Perhaps you once heard how the captain of the Scarlet Tiger was a powerful wizard but, upon seeing me, you instantly thought it was only a rumour,” Leylin strolled in front of those traitors. What he said made their expression change drastically and, at this point, many of them were already secretly regretting their actions.

“But let me tell you that, unfortunately, your guesses are wrong.”

A refined and courteous smile was plastered on Leylin's face. What he did next, however, wasn't so civilized.

"Fireball!" Two balls of fire shot out, and the red-haired pirate was instantly torched.

The powerful force of the spell immediately made numerous pirates retreat one by one, a look of respect emerging on their faces.

"Animate Rope!" Leylin pointed his finger. The once useless cable suddenly started moving about, as if it had a life of its own. It nimbly bound the rebellious pirates together, and hung them upside-down on the deck.

The numerous ropes resembled the tentacles of a formidable monster as they danced around continuously, while Leylin looked like the powerful wizard who tamed the monsters of the sea only found in legends. Many pirates couldn't help but kneel down.

"Ah! Release me! Release me! This is the Pirates' Cove, ye can't do this! The Barbarian Pirates crew ain't gonna let ye off!"

A few pirates were still putting up their final struggle. Their high-pitched voices pierced the air, attracting a team of barbarian guards.

There was a glimmer of hope on the faces of the captive whey they saw the guards. However, it was unfortunate that their hopes

were immediately smashed to smithereens.

Upon seeing the flag of the Scarlet Tiger, these barbarians left immediately, not even bothering about the tragedy that was taking place.

“This treatment! It means there’s an alliance with the Barbarian Pirates crew! Boss has already made an alliance with the Barbarians!” The numerous pirates immediately began to heartily surrender. With the assistance of the prestigious Barbarian Pirates and his own formidable strength, Leylin knew that he had finally established a definite amount of trust with these newly recruited pirates, at least for the time being.

“Boss! Please spare us!” “Respectable and powerful Lord Wizard! Red Oarsman Lucas Codd is willin’ to pledge loyalty to ye!”

At this point, the pirates hanging upside-down sank into despair, and many began begging for forgiveness.

“Traitors must be dealt with strictly and severely. That way, the others can witness how high a price one must pay for betraying me!” Leylin’s indifferent tone sent a chill through the hearts of the other pirates.

Following his orders, the cable ropes suddenly tightened, forcing out copious amounts of blood.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

Splashes of blood burst out. The gazes of the other pirates were filled with fear; right now, Leylin looked like the king of all devils.

Chapter 836 - Reward

“Master! Your beautiful strength is like a resplendent jewel, brimming with a dazzling brilliance!” Karen, who was standing beside Leylin, immediately complimented him. As a half-drow, she seemed to have regained her natural instincts after being liberated. She was gradually recovering her darkness and thirst for blood, which was characteristic of the drow.

“Alright, get up.”

Cyclops and the other pirates who had long pledged their loyalty were already aware of the outcome, thus they didn't appear to be flabbergasted. The new pirates, on the other hand, were all frightened out of their wits, especially Ronald and his group.

“So, what do you think? Does anyone else have any objections?”

Leylin ran his eyes over the crowd. The other pirates didn't dare meet his gaze, yet their eyes were brimming with reverence.

“Excellent! I like the respectful look in your eyes.” Leylin nodded. His subordinates immediately pulled out two trunks of silver kronas and copper coins.

This was the only payment he had obtained from selling the majority of goods he had on hand. Madam Tillen had ruthlessly cut the prices, probably in an attempt to vent her anger.

However, this much was sufficient to maintain the pirate crew for a few months. As for the months after that? Why would he still worry about providing for his men after getting a hold of the riches of the entire sea?

“The pay I promised earlier will not be reduced.” Leylin opened the chest. The twinkling radiance of the silver kronas blinded the eyes of numerous pirates.

“Each buccaneer of the Scarlet Tiger will obtain a fixed salary every month, in addition to the loot plundered,” Leylin announced loudly. This policy was quite different from the usual pirate way, and it instantly received cheers from the pirates.

Although it was akin to opening a huge hole in the finance department, Leylin needed to create a strong pirate crew as fast as possible, and he couldn't care less about anything else.

After all, immense pressure and death threats were insufficient to govern a huge group. A system that gave encouragement through incentives had to be established. Otherwise, why would they join a crew with a temperamental captain like Leylin, when there are so many other pirate crews?

As soon as news of this spread, no matter how savage Leylin would be rumoured to be, he probably would still have enough manpower sources. Perhaps he could even attract a few Professionals, which would be incredibly amusing.

‘As expected, these pirates don't have a single bit of loyalty.’

After giving out the money, the newly recruited pirates were immediately in high spirits. They looked as if they had completely forgotten what had happened earlier. Leylin secretly shook his head.

However, this was the objective truth, and there was absolutely nothing that could change that. Leylin could only take a laissez-faire approach.

After all, the control that any pirate captain had over his men was always the same. Unless authority was rooted deeply after long periods of time together, and trust was established through continuous victories, this was all it would amount to.

If it was not like this, Leylin wouldn't have been able to subdue the Black Tiger crew previously, and set up a new crew with them as the first few subordinates.

‘These incentives... It seems like it is still not enough.’

There was a flash in Leylin's eyes as he stood on the platform, “Giant!”

“I'm here, boss!” Giant immediately half knelt on the floor. His body resembled a small-scale mountain.

“You killed more than ten enemies when you accompanied me last time. You're also the Professional with the highest rank among

all my men. I want to reward you.”

Leylin waved his hands and a piece of leather armor, that resembled a singlet, flew in front of Giant. There was an armor plating in the most crucial body parts, offering better protection.

Giant put on his sleeveless leather armour. His face, however, changed when a magical brilliance burst from his armour. He couldn't help but shout in surprise, “This is magical armour!”

“What? Magical armour?” This immediately attracted envious looks from the other pirates.

Even though it was the cheapest of all magical goods, it had to be supported by primary smelting spells, and was worth hundreds of gold coins. Furthermore, a life-saving item such as this one was priceless.

“Yes. It has been reinforced by the “Hardness Spell” three times. Even a heavy hammer would be unable to break through your defense with a single blow.”

Actually, the raw material of this leather armour had been looted from the captain of the Merfolk Pirates after the battle. Leylin had found it to be beneath him, thus he decided to modify it for his men to equip.

Giant didn't know what else to say and could only scratch his head as he smiled foolishly, while attracting a few jealous looks.

“Also, Ronald!” Leylin turned his gaze to Ronald.

“Young master! You called for me?” Ronald knelt on the floor with one knee, with a strange feeling in his heart.

“Yes! Your earlier actions attest to your loyalty! This rapid explosion ring is yours!”

This had also been a contribution made by those unlucky Merfolk Pirates. Leylin did not feel a tad bit embarrassed.

“Many thanks!” Ronald felt as though he had been struck in the chest by a heavy hammer/

While knowing that he had only coincidentally been there when Leylin needed to point out role models amongst the new pirates, he was still elated.

This was indeed a magical item! It was so valuable that it could be a family heirloom for commoners, knights and lords.

“I will always be loyal to you!” Ronald kissed the ring on his finger, and solemnly accepted this precious treasure into his embrace, also attracting many envious stares. Mainly, many of the new pirates had flushed faces. They gazed at Leylin as though they were looking at a god.

As long as they worked hard , there would be hope. As long as they put in the effort, there would be reward.

More often than not, the people of the lower classes only hoped for so much, yet the upper classes cruelly deprived them of even this slight hope.

But now, Leylin showed them hope of being able to completely change their fates. This alone was sufficient to arouse their enthusiasm and will to fight.

“Raise the flag! Set sail!” Seeing their boosted morales, Leylin loudly announced his command.

“Aye! Aye!” The multitude of pirates immediately started to get busy. Under the directions of Cyclops, Hulk and the others, the Scarlet Tiger was quickly driven out of the dock.

At this moment, the bishop and priest from the God of Murder were silently observing the situation from the shadows, until the ship departed.

The bishop spoke after a long silence, “What do you think?”

“He’s firm when dealing with issues, determined and unscrupulous. It’s hard to believe that he is only fifteen!” The priest seemed unwilling to admit it, but eventually admitted.

“But even so, we don’t have to tell him about ‘that’, right?”

The bishop replied with a cold snort, “Cly has already violated the teachings of our master, and is bent on avenging his brother who betrayed the church long ago. He must be punished for such conduct.”

However, these were just excuses, The pivotal point was that Cly was a hindrance to his own plan.

For a person with great influence, disposing of a small pawn was nothing in the face of the bigger picture.

As long as the glory of the God of Murder continued shining across the seas for eternity, what was the worth of a few highly-ranked assassins?

“I’m looking forward to what will happen to him” The bishop smiled as his silhouette slowly faded into the darkness.

The priest’s eyes were filled with shock. As the bishop left, he started understanding that the bishop actually placed great importance on that young nobleman.

.....

The Scarlet Tiger sailed on under the azure skies, although it appeared to be moving slowly, it was travelling at high speeds.

“Five hundred metres ahead! I spotted an unknown ship without a pirate flag!” The mariner on the observation deck called out.

“Boss!” Giant immediately appeared behind Leylin, donned in his newly-attained leather armour.

Cyclops also appeared next to Leylin and reported softly, “I asked around beforehand. A bunch of scurvy dogs are coveting our booty and ship.”

“Organisations that have been blinded by greed?” Leylin suddenly raised his brows, “Their vessel doesn’t look too shabby. We are still lacking a few buccaneers and slaves, aren’t we?”

After hearing Leylin’s words, Giant and the rest were already dedicating a moment of silence in mourning for the pirates on the other ship. They would never know what a terrifying chap they had provoked.

“Prepare for battle. I want to check out the strength of these men,” Leylin instructed Ronald, who was standing behind him.

“On it, young master! You will see it!” Ronald retreated respectfully.

With such a formidable wizard on board, he couldn’t see the slightest possibility of them being defeated.

The two ships came into contact. Without the slightest bit of

hesitation or shouting, they both launched their attacks.

After the whistling of the harpoons and numerous rounds of feathered arrows flying back and forth, they immediately jumped aboard each other's ships and descended into a chaotic battle.

Giant laughed maniacally as he brandished the enormous claw hammer in his hand. He was covered in the enemy's blood and resembled a fiend emerging from the abyss as he charged forth in the frontline.

Behind him, Ronald commanded the new pirates, and assembled them into a few simple formations, obtaining favourable results. He felt as if he possessed an irresistible force, especially with the weapon infused with poison that Leylin had provided.

Seeing his fluent commanding skills, Leylin couldn't help but be fond of him, 'Who would have thought that Ronald would be a military genius?'

"You guys attack them as well. I'm going to meet with an old friend." Leylin waved his hands and flew out of his ship, landing onto the opponent's deck.

Ray of Frost! Fireball!

A hell made of fire and ice spread across the ship, along with the ghoulish wails and painful howls of numerous pirates.

“He’s a wizard!”

The powerful force generated by the spells instantly dealt a huge blow to the morale of his opponents. The situation seemed to be tipped in favour of Leylin and his party.

At this moment, however, several secret conscripts with the intent to kill approached from the darkness. Their keen aura had the characteristic of highly-ranked assassins.

“It’s indeed you guys!” The corners of Leylin’s lips curled into a gentle smile as he tore open the magic scroll in his hands right away.

“Ice Storm!” The snow attack covered an even larger area, and had the powerful might of a rank 4 spell. Leylin’s surroundings instantly turned into a land of ice and snow.

Chapter 837 - Return Home

Plunk! A few figures were forced out of stealthy advancement, and their bodies bore the traces of having been frozen.

“How did you find us?” Cly’s face was now filled with disbelief.

“Dead men don’t need to know anything!” The blood-red Devilblood Dagger appeared in Leylin’s hand, making him look more evil.

Whoosh! He turned into a phantom, pouncing towards these few assassins.

“Damn it...” Feeling sluggish from the frost, Cly’s expression was incredibly sinister. Somehow, he already knew who had sold him out.

In the end, all he saw was a dazzling blood-red.

Pu! Pu! Pu! Making use of the hindrance from the ice storm and the poor visibility, Leylin took care of the assassins in an instant. The many enemies with immense injuries caused by the ice storm finally lifted their white flag to surrender.

However, Leylin was disinclined to bother with matters like his subordinates looting and taking prisoners. He looked at the prompt his A.I. Chip gave him.

[Beep! Host has been enhanced by the Devilblood Dagger. Agility has increased by 0.3!]

‘0.3? Not bad. If that’s changed into spiritual force, that might be even less than 0.0001!’

Leylin was very satisfied with this. He had far too much spiritual force, and slight increases like this meant nothing to him. Hence, he focused on his shortcomings.

Making use of the ability of the Devilblood Dagger, he was confident that he could develop his stats in an all-rounded way to become the perfect existence!

Though that was only for perfection below rank 10.

His stats had turned into:

[Leylin Farlier. Race: Human. Rank 8 Wizard. Strength: 3.5. Agility: 3.3. Vitality: 4.5. Spiritual force: 8. State: Healthy. Talents: Sturdy, Erudite. Spell Slots: Rank 3(2). Rank 2(4). Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]

At this moment, Karen came beside Leylin. “Master, all the remaining people who resist us have been purged!”

“Good! Send news to the Church of Murder to say that I have already received their goodwill!” Leylin now had a satisfied grin on his face.

.....

Faulen Island, in the temporary camp that Leylin had first built.

Jacob, who was patrolling the area, suddenly heard his subordinate reporting to him in panic. “My lord, there’s an unknown fleet nearing us!”

“What? Are they pirates? Be on the alert!”

Jacob’s expression was solemn. On the outer seas, pirates would never go extinct. They were like a pack of ravenous wolves, attacking any ships or ports that would bring them wealth.

A bell rang urgently, and with the soldiers urging them on, the slaves hid within wooden houses. The rest of the soldiers took their weapons and watched the sail in the distance.

However, even Jacob involuntarily gaped, unable to say a word.

Large. It was much too large! There were three huge ships with densely packed human figures atop them, causing Jacob to say bitterly, “These numbers are probably enough to attack the whole

Faulen Island. Could this be the three legendary large-scale pirate groups?”

“It’s the time to show your loyalty to the family till the end!” Jacob gripped the weapon in his hand tightly and yelled.

“Long live Faulen!” “Long live!” Many soldiers yelled together, but their voices were filled with immense fear. A few soldiers were already looking out for escape routes. Not everyone could view death with equanimity. Under the threat of death, too many things could happen.

The three huge ships did not hesitate as they drew closer. However, there were no pirate flags at the top. Could this instead be three large merchant ships?

Merchant ships? How was that possible? Jacob was completely confused.

At this moment, a figure flew like an eagle from the ship, heading in his direction.

“That’s Fly! It’s a mid-rank wizard spell, could it be...” Jacob’s expression changed, eventually turning into one of anticipation and elation, “It’s young master! Young master is back!”

As the streams of air dissipated, Leylin’s figure stopped in front of Jacob, “You did well with the camp!”

He'd taken a quick look at this camp from the skies and found that Jacob had completed everything according to his plans. It already was in a good state, able to take in a new population and slaves, which would help him with his trading plans.

“Many thanks for your praise! It's actually thanks to the slaves. They work diligently everyday, but it's a pity there are too few of them...” Jacob placed his right hand on his chest, bowing respectfully.

“You don't have to worry about the slaves. I brought a lot... and there are other surprises as well! Prepare to dispatch people to take them.” Leylin had a trace of a smile on his expression. A huge flame flew from his hand, forming an obvious signal.

The three ships began to move slowly, releasing countless little boats that rowed in their direction like ants.

“Three ships...” Jacob's eyes widened.

“Hehe... These are ships of the Rhodes Merchant group. I made a deal with them and bought large numbers of slaves and coarse sugar...” Leylin watched the many little boats, frowning slightly.

“Here!” He pointed to a coastal area, “We'll need to build a new dock. Of course, there were far too few people before, but this won't be a problem now...”

Seeing the unending stream of slaves and baskets of coarse sugar,

as well as other construction materials unceasingly being sent ashore, Jacob clenched his fists. His face flushed.

While he had no idea how this mysterious young master had gotten a hold of this, that had nothing to do with him, did it? As a subordinate, all he needed to do was carry out his superior's orders. That was enough! Just seeing how much Leylin had spent, it was obvious that he was planning to go big.

“Jacob! Make arrangements for the slaves being shipped over. Males and females are to be separated and watched. Don't let them get up to anything funny!”

Leylin's blueprint had been very large, and he had even especially left out blank spaces in it. Hence, it was not an issue to take in hundreds of slaves.

Besides the unskilled labourers, there were many confused faces. The sickly slaves who were chased into a camp barricaded with pointy wooden fences.

There, Nunooker, whom Leylin had appointed as head of the slaves, had already commanded the older ones to bring out pots of mashed fish soup to share with the newcomers. He then darted to Leylin upon catching sight of him, kissing the soil under his feet, “Respected master, Nunooker expresses his reverence for you!”

“I heard you managed the slaves well. Good job!” Leylin nodded. Nunooker had already put on linen clothing and looked somewhat like a commoner now. There was even a lash hung at his waist that

seemed rather worn out, making it look well-used. His clothes and whip all showed the rise in his authority and status.

“Do it well. After this, I’ll remove your contract as a slave and free you. I’ll even give you some land!” Leylin was never stingy with those who sided with him, and this would also set an example for others.

“Oh, great master, I praise you! Your benevolence is as vast as the ocean!” Nunooker knelt down once more.

A manager clad in silk clothing with gold threads on his cuffs came beside Leylin, “My lord, the goods have all been received. There are a total of 275 slaves and 5000kg of coarse sugar! There are also other goods as well. This is the bill for your account...”

“Mm, the numbers are right!” Leylin took a glance at him, knowing that he had not done anything fishy with them. The manager wouldn’t dare to anyway, since Leylin was a channel to dispose of stolen groups belonging to the Barbarians.

It was understandable why he feared Leylin. In addition, even if they were to practice fraud, this would not be able to trick Leylin. Hence, Leylin quickly signed his name after looking at the bill, then stamped it with a special ring of his.

This was a dagger and skull, the mark of the Scarlet Tigers! This ruby ring could be opened at the top, and it held Leylin’s pirate imprint inside. This was also proof that he had dealings with the Barbarians.

“Alright, you have already paid for the goods before. The deal has been completed successfully. Thank you for your cooperation!” After seeing Leylin sign his name, the manager sighed in relief and then revealed a genuine smile.

“Thank you for your cooperation!” Leylin’s eyes moved swiftly away, thoughts already on other matters.

Once he had left from Pirates’ Cove, Leylin had wiped out a few pirate groups who had wanted to take advantage of them. Once he had established his reputation and secured his status, he met up with Isabel and the rest at a place they had previously arranged.

Due to the many battles and prisoners, Leylin’s pirate group had already changed greatly by the time he met up with his cousin and the others. He now had a tremendous organisation, with three battleships and over two hundred pirates under him!

Though they seemed like nothing more than a mob, it wasn’t as if there weren’t any talents amongst them. If Leylin was counted as well, this new crew was the strongest one out of the big three. He even had the capital to challenge the larger pirate groups!

What happened next was obvious. With information from the Thieves’ Guild and Barbarians, Leylin brought his subordinates and plundered countless merchant ships that belonged to the Louis Family, killing all of the passengers. The goods were naturally mostly sold to the Rhodes Merchant group using the Barbarian Pirates’ connections, and in return he earned many slaves and

resources.

Following that, the pirates that had endured countless battles needed to rest and reorganise. Leylin seized this opportunity to let his cousin Isabel take over, announcing her the acting captain with Hulk, Cyclops, Giant, Karen and Ronald assisting her. Meanwhile, he returned to his own family's territory.

Chapter 838 - Sugar Cubes

There were a few special little families in this batch of slaves, those of the Black Tiger pirates who were no more. Leylin planned to integrate them into his people to fill up the population here. At the same time, they could be treated like hostages; any pirate that pledged his life to him at the start would no longer need to be doubted.

Without any major changes, the possibility of their betrayal was at their lowest.

‘When it comes to the accumulation of resources, plundering is truly the fastest method!’

Of all the resources this time, there was a special batch that was the spoils of war that Leylin would keep for himself. This included the crude sugar obtained on Half Merfolk Island, as well as items that were difficult to dispose of.

After all this privateering, it could be said that the basic conditions to build the production lines were already in place. The next step was to attempt to produce the items themselves. Had he used the normal method of having his family invest capital into the project, he would have to slowly buy slaves and make attempts to produce the product. He would have suffered difficulties even in the beginning!

“No matter what kind of production it is, privateering is the key part...”

Leylin sighed, “It’s a pity that after Marquis Louis’ organisation dispersed, I can’t go on being a pirate. After all, then I would be viewed as an enemy by many, and there would even be people who have formed grudges against me...”

Destruction and plunder easily gave rise to hatred. At the same time, it had the quickest results, which was why people could not give it up so easily. Leylin being able to make this decision showed his foresight and wisdom.

The pirates would not give up, and that led to the entire region of the sea being abandoned by merchants. Only massive growth of trade would serve as a source of wealth, which was why Leylin wanted to create a sugar and fish floss trade.

Of course, this did not mean that Leylin would disband the pirate group.

In reality, he had already thought of the alternate route for the Scarlet Tigers in the future. They would no longer engage in piracy, instead they would share their ill-gotten gains from collecting protection fees and naval escort services, for instance.

In essence, they would be taken from exploiting others openly, to exploiting them from the shadows.

Leylin was very ambitious! To do this, he had to first become the king of the outer seas, or at the very least, the king of the dark world and possess the power to draw up rules and regulations!

That would also be the rise of his power over the seas! If all went well, he might even be able to create a powerful country based on this sea!

Leylin would not reject the chance to gain power in the secular world. Rather, that was what he was working hard and making preparations for.

As the gods of this world needed the faith of mortals, especially for the newly-advanced gods, having a stable foundation for faith as well as their own territory was far too important. This was what could be relied on to protect and prevent the fall of their divine nation.

The gods were far-sighted. Leylin could not steal the followers of the old gods, because that would only result in a terrifying battle with a god!

His way would be to develop a new territory of his own, and expand the population to gain faith.

Any issues when it came to the time it would take was never a problem for gods.

Three ships steered away from the port under Jacob and the others' watchful eyes. Leylin clapped his eyes, smiling at Jacob, "Alright! What happens next is our responsibility. How are things on your side?"

Jacob looked startled, “Please come with me!”

Leylin opened the wooden door to one of the little storehouses in the camp and was met with the smell of sea salt and fishiness.

There were rows of wooden frames inside, where a large quantity of fish floss were tightly sealed well in porcelain jars.

“Based on the method Young Master taught us, the fish floss we created can be kept for over a month. If we use this method of storing it, it can last for over half a year...”

Jacob sounded excited, “With this shelf life, we’ll be able to sell the fish floss to the continent...”

“Mm! The key now is to have a small profit but rapid turnover!” Leylin nodded.

Techniques to create fish floss were not all that meticulous. What was important now was upscaling and industrialising it, which would reduce costs.

Even so, there were a limited number of consumers. At the very least, Leylin could not place his hopes on the farmers and tenants in villages

All they could squeeze out of them was meagre, and they’d be

happy if they just got to eat black bread.

Leylin's target market lay in the larger cities. There were handicraft workers, free citizens, many adventurers and mercenaries, who Leylin were counting on.

The villages in the World of Gods were never places where wealth gathered. The cities were the only places with the greatest profits.

He didn't need much. As long as he could break into a few cities near the shore, the profits alone would make Leylin smile brilliantly even in his dreams.

“As for the sugar refinery, due to the lack of acid and activated carbon that Young Master spoke of, we have only stockpiled a batch of raw materials in storage...”

Jacob brought Leylin to another warehouse. Sealed under dry conditions, the sugar was piled together, with some yellow and even black inside.

This was coarse sugar that was even slightly bitter. However, the bit of sweetness within was already a pretty good luxury for the nobles.

However, as this was the outer seas, the moisture in the air caused the white sugar to show signs of coagulating into clumps despite methods that attempted to rectify it.

“It doesn’t matter for now, since there will still be another process. The fine white sugar created after that will need even more attention though!”

This was the greatest wealth that Leylin had gotten for himself.

Fish floss would garner small profits but a rapid turnover and thus expand production. However, methods to refine white sugar would have to be kept a secret. This way, he had control over both high and low-end markets, and if he was lucky, this might be able to keep the Faulen Family rich for centuries!

Leylin was rather ambitious about this.

In his plans, this place would become the Faulen Island’s most important port, and even the core of the island!

Of course, before either of these two were developed, Leylin would keep all these plans deep inside his heart.

Though it looked more convenient and safer to plunder another island, Leylin was unperturbed.

The problem here was the feudal fiefdom!

In theory, the outer seas of the Dambrath Kingdom naturally belonged to the king. Once unclaimed lands were occupied, that

would imply losing protection from the kingdom and would stir up hostility!

What would it imply, for the outer seas without land held by nobility, with no shrines, churches or priests?

Terrifying diseases could not be healed with divine spells, and could only be endured. People also had to deal with the ferocious natives and terrible climate.

In the deep seas, there were also numerous terrifying monsters, with some able to massacre a whole island!

Every year, the number of people who died while trying to break into the outer seas was a number that would cause one to tremble in fear.

Hence, as the Faulen Island had been cleared and cultivated, with a great port, people and church as foundations, it was inevitable that Viscount Tim coveted it.

However, Leylin had long since treated Faulen Island as his own, which determined the pitiful fate of the poor Viscount.

“Jacob, send down the order to give the slaves another meal tonight. We begin training tomorrow, where we are going to prepare the selected outstanding artisans to take part in the production. The rest of the slaves will extend the camp. Whatever it is, we can’t have them idle!”

The method to create fish floss was extremely simple, but the method to refining sugar was something Leylin was planning to keep a secret for a few years. While he would be left with no choice but to hand over the techniques later, the immense profits before that happen were going to be terrifying.

Leylin was already planning to sternly exercise control over the artisans, and even set out individual residential areas that would be monitored.

Leylin was the worthy master of this land. Once he made a decision like this, it would be enforced without question.

When Baron Jonas arrived, what he saw was an area buzzing with activity.

“Such a huge camp with so many slaves, wouldn’t that cost thousands of gold coins?”

Baron Jonas walked along the streets in disbelief, carefully sizing up the camp. The ground was tidy, and there were spaces at both sides meant for shops, blacksmith stores and tailor stores. It was clear that Leylin had planned this out very carefully, and had built this place up like a little town.

“Yes, master! To create this camp and purchase the slaves, it would be possibly only if we invest months of profit from our entire port...”

Leon's eyes betrayed his shock, especially after he saw the many slaves being managed by Leylin in such a clear and orderly fashion. His eyes flashed and he looked on speechlessly. Only he, as the main housekeeper, knew how difficult it was to tame so many natives!

The young master, who was able to do this, was truly the treasured child of the gods!

At this thought, Leon could not help but to say a prayer.

But this was just the start. After seeing the completed product that Leylin spoke of, Baron Jonas and Leon were even more shocked.

“Is this... truly cane sugar?”

Eyeing the snow white sparkling cubes that were reflective like mirrors, Baron Jonas picked up a cube in disbelief.

Such a translucent luster was mind-blowing to him, “It's too-too beautiful! It's like a crystal. This is a work of art!”

Baron Jonas mumbled as he tossed it into his mouth, and a sweetness then exploded in his mouth.

Such a sweet taste caused Baron Jonas to be so moved that he

could not even speak.

“I can tell you for sure...” After a long while, Baron Jonas huffed out, “The sugar cubes will definitely be a luxury that the nobility long for. Without it, those extravagant banquets will lose much splendour...”

“You are right, Father!” Standing at the side, Leylin revealed a smile.

Chapter 839 - Venus

Leylin put down the plate that contained the sugar in his hand and looked at Baron Jonas, “Father, how much do you think I can sell these refined sugar cubes for?”

Baron Jonas closed his eyes for a moment and answered with certainty, “It should be at least ten times the price of coarse sugar! If we weren’t afraid of someone backstabbing us or coveting this, we could perhaps sell it at even twenty times.”

Leylin smiled and nodded. “Then I’ll leave the avenues of selling it to Father!”

The moment the method to create such refined sugar cubes entered the market, it would have a huge effect. How could Leylin match up to Baron Jonas in behaving appropriately, finding backers, transferring profits, and building profitable partnerships and the like? His father was a very experienced trader.

“I’ve just seen the fish floss jars, and they’re not bad!” Baron Jonas looked at his son, his eyes full of indescribable emotion, “Sigh... You’ve really created a difficult problem for your father! Such immense profits...”

While he was sighing, the Baron still could not conceal his smile. Leylin always seemed to be able to surpass his expectations in unimaginable ways.

.....

With enough manpower and physical resources, the fish floss and sugar trade that Leylin was anticipating finally began to take shape. Baron Jonas knew full well that such immense profits were something that his family could not handle alone, so he made use of the two items to rope in a few other noble families that had their lands in the outer seas. He also got in touch with the local forces, and gave them a large portion of the profits. This way, there were a lot of people he could drag into deep waters to bear the brunt of the backlash with him.

The moment Faulen Island's refined white sugar entered the market, the effect even surpassed the baron's imagination.

Its pure taste was as sweet as heaven, and immediately conquered many nobles. They rushed to find this luxury item like they'd been driven insane. Just the profits from the first month reached a startling 2000 gold coins!

The fish floss was not as popular, but the market's reaction was not bad. Its characteristic of being convenient food as well as the benefit of being able to store it for a long period of time made it popular among mercenaries and adventurers. Even the military of the kingdom expressed their interest.

The profits of this becoming military rations... was there more to be said?

Making use of these two items earned them tons of wealth, the Faulen Family began to grow at a rapid rate. Leylin had to even

open up a few production lines in order to match the insane market demand!

Of course, this couldn't have been done without the Scarlet Tiger pirates investing a lot of funds. With Leylin controlling everything from the shadows and the aid from the Barbarians, the Scarlet Tiger Pirates had gone all out, attacking numerous ships that belonged to Marquis Louis under Isabel's lead.

Leylin waited on Faulen Island, like nothing had to do with him. The Barbarians were also exceptionally quiet, making the marquis unable to find any evidence. He could only grit his teeth in the shadows, preparing to exact revenge.

Nearly a year passed in the blink of an eye. The camp that Leylin had constructed had now turned into a bustling harbour with limestone floors and tiled houses. There was an imposing aura in the area, and the port was arranged very logically. Security was very good, and there was not a trace of trash on the ground.

When compared to other ports, this was unimaginable. They were nasty and filthy, and usually the sources of diseases and epidemics. Leylin obviously would not tolerate this. Furthermore, a clean, tidy, and orderly port was unimaginably attractive for sea merchants.

With the fish floss and the refined sugar cubes dominating the markets, the port was now a money-making area. A lot of ships stopped at the pier every day, loading up completely on goods before leaving. Even at night, the labourers would still work with much clamour; the place looked prosperous.

Leylin named the place Port Venus, an allegory for a rising star. And indeed, once it was constructed it attracted many merchants into frequenting Faulen Island, and it silently became another trading hub of the outer seas.

Originally, The Baltic archipelago and Pirates' Cove which belonged to two different powers dominated the scene, but Port Venus marked the rise of a third power. Such a huge change obviously attracted the attention of intelligent people.

“My lord, here’s the latest news!” A middle-rank warrior in exquisite chainmail armour respectfully passed a letter sealed in wax to Jacob.

Jacob hastily opened it up, and after skimming through a few lines his expression changed, “This is... I’ll tell young master myself!”

Once they left the room, two rows of elite warriors followed behind him, all of them with a strong and bloody aura. Their eyes even seemed to glint, they were naturally elite warriors who had activated their qi.

After walking out of the city hall, Jacob mounted a handsome black stallion. While he could use a horse carriage as a public security officer, his fighter habits made it such that he preferred to ride horses himself.

Glancing at the luxurious and imposing city hall at his back, the

many middle-ranked warriors behind him, and the eyes of people on the roads looking to curry favour with him, Jacob was slightly absent-minded.

‘Everything has really changed!’ Jacob sighed. When they came into their wealth, Leylin and Baron Jonas did not hoard their gold like greedy dragons. On the contrary, other than to construct more production lines and Port Venus itself, Baron Jonas had the great vision to take out almost all his savings to increase the power of the Faulen Family.

Exquisite chainmail and stainless steel longswords replaced the leather armour, metal forks and wooden pikes from before on a large scale. He even recruited huge batches of Professionals. While it wasn’t quite possible to get high-ranked ones at rank 15 and above, the middle-ranked ones and especially close combat warriors just could not reject the conditions the Baron had offered.

After serving here for a long time, many of these with professions fell in love with the atmosphere and brought their families here, becoming free citizens of Port Venus. Leylin was extremely welcome to the idea, and was generous in his treatment and the promotions. This formed a virtuous cycle, which helped his subordinates get even stronger.

Jacob knew that there were already Professionals over rank 10 siding with Leylin. If not for him following the Baron around since childhood and working hard for the family, his own position would long since have been filled with someone else.

Even so, the sense of danger kept lingering in his mind.

‘I need to train even more. I have a feeling that the bottleneck that’s been bothering me for years should be able to be broken this time!’ With the rise of the Faulen Family’s income, Jacob and those of his batch naturally benefitted.

Their salaries rose sky high, and Jacob felt that he was not deserving of this. Not only did he use this money for lessons from scholars, but he also sought powerful warriors for their advice. He had now reached the peak of rank 7, and was a step away from rank 8.

The new wheat farms met him outside the port, the green wheat filled with vitality freshening up the air. Jacob couldn’t help but take in several deep breaths.

Those farming here were the farmers who had migrated over from Faulen Island, and there were also slaves that had been released and the families of pirates.

Leylin especially made it a law that as long as slaves worked hard, they would regain their status as free people after a certain number of years, and would acquire 0.6 hectares of land. After paying three years of taxes, they could go to the city hall and apply to redeem it at a low price and become farmers of their own plots of land. The promise of becoming free men motivated the slaves to work with all their might.

Leylin knew that no matter how human society changed, a hierarchy would always remain. Allowing mobility between the

levels would give those at the bottom hope, and was the only method that would ensure the vitality of both the organisation and government.

Past the wheat fields were even more guards. Jacob could sense knight-errants, thieves and even assassins spying from the shadows as the farms gave way to an industrial zone. This was where the fish floss and sugar were produced.

Ever since his first trade profits made their way into his hands, Leylin had shifted his production line to the area to give the port more space. It was also convenient to supervise it and ensure the secrecy of the place.

With the expansion of the profits from trade, the issue of security became increasingly serious. It was at the point that Leylin and his master Ernest came here personally to take charge of it. Most of the Faulen Family's elite forces were here, which frightened off numerous spies. However, as long as there were huge profits, the spying would never end.

Leylin's villa was next to the factories. He was never one to mistreat himself, and the villa took up a lot of space. He had even brought over his servants from the manor, including the housekeepers. Of course, Clara and Claire came as well.

Jacob only saw Leylin after two rank 10 warrior patrols. His sixteenth birthday had passed, and Leylin now seemed more mature. His curly blonde hair was like the sunlight, and his blue eyes like the sea. Every inch of his musculature was perfect, which made one feel that his proportions were in perfect harmony.

Rather, with his current appearance he seemed like the ideal lover for a noble princess.

The sisters' eyes showed how intoxicated they were by him; they hadn't even noticed Jacob's entrance.

Chapter 840 - Closer

“Young master, we’ve received news that a Gold Priest of the church of wealth would like to meet you. He’ll reach Venus Port in the next few days.”

Claire and Clara blushing brought Jacob a goblet of mixed fruit juice after waking up from their reverie. This was a drink of the elves that Leylin found delightful.

“Gold Priest? Just having a Silver Priest coming over would already be enough...” Leylin half-reclined on the elven rattan chair, looking languid, comfortable, and not ruffled at all.

Waukeen’s priests were divided into a few ranks, the highest of which was the current Patriarch. The rest of them were arranged according to currency, copper being the lowest and gold the highest.

A Gold Priest was equivalent to an archbishop, a status that greatly exceeded that of Bishop Tapris from the church of knowledge. Even if Tapris was converted by Waukeen, he would only be a Silver Priest.

The church of wealth sending out a Gold Priest showed that Faulen Island’s trade volumes had reached a terrifying level. It was to the point that it even attracted some attention from the Goddess of Wealth!

“Understood. Tell them to give him VIP treatment!”

While this was important, Jacob felt relaxed after hearing Leylin's instructions. It was like he believed that as long as he did as Leylin said, things would go well!

This was the prestige that Leylin amassed over time, and at times, had the ability to reverse the trend of events.

After watching Jacob leave, Leylin pursed his lips and took a drink of fruit juice, a strange grin emerging on his face, "The Goddess of Wealth? Not bad..."

Port Venus was like Leylin's personal fiefdom. While it belonged to Baron Jonas in name, Leylin held the real power here, and had tight control of the management of the port. He had not constructed any churches here, much to Bishop Tapris' chagrin.

But neither Leylin nor Baron Jonas wanted the church of knowledge to solely occupy Faulen Island. And besides the God of Suffering, the Goddess of Wealth was the god that was most worshipped by nobility.

The nobles held the most faith in their own benefits and power. Of course this led to them believing in the Goddess of Wealth. After all, who could resist those adorable and dazzling bundles of gold?

Baron Jonas had long hoped to be able to attract the church of wealth into building a shrine to their goddess here. However, the Faulen Family had been too poor before, and the church of

knowledge had obstructed it. However, this was now a request from the church of wealth themselves, and with a Gold Priest being sent over it was obvious how serious they were.

Leylin welcomed the church of wealth's presence here. The benefits it would bring to the region's development were obvious.

The priests of wealth were amazing at making profit. They didn't limit themselves to business; even with their gamut of profitable ventures there was nothing they did not do. From storing precious items, to remitting gold, to converting money between the different metals, they even provided high interest loans— as long as it was profitable, there was nothing they wouldn't dare do.

However, it could not be denied that with the church of wealth would partially take over the role of a bank, and there would only be advantages in trade and economic development.

Since this was a request from the other side, how could Leylin let go of such a great chance to rip somebody off? He could also take this opportunity to take revenge on what they had done in the past.

At this thought, Leylin's smile widened. He took a look at his stats.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 16. Race: Human, Rank 9 Wizard. Strength: 4.5. Agility: 5. Vitality: 6. Spirit: 9. Status: Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite. Spell Slots: Rank 4(1), Rank 3(3), Rank

2(5), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]

[Progress of analysis of the Weave: Rank 0: 100%. Rank 1: 100%. Rank 2: 25.17%. Rank 3: 8.89%. Rank 4: 0.001%.]

This past year, Leylin had secretly worked to help the Scarlet Tigers eliminate their enemies. Isabel now had the nickname of the ‘Scarlet Witch’ and was notorious in the outer seas. Half of that was thanks to Leylin.

The Devilblood Dagger also took this opportunity to drink the fresh blood of enemies, pushing Leylin to rank 9.

A rank 9 wizard was an existence that could make contact with fourth level of the Weave! At this point, Leylin had basically graduated from his study under Ernest. If not for Leylin’s continuous motivation, Ernest would’ve been embarrassed to see his disciple. He had spent a lot of effort and broken through all the way to rank 10.

“Now that I can cast rank 4 spells, master Ernest has nothing to teach me anymore...” Leylin sighed. He could now cast rank 4 spells, and due to his specialisation, Ernest rarely learnt spells out of Abjuration and Evocation. Leylin felt like it was a great pity.

He now spent most of his time in self-study. Of course, with the Faulen Family’s current wealth, buying some foundational spell

models and scholarly volumes was no problem. However, what vexed Leylin was that the kingdom's wizard guilds were useful for low-ranked wizards, but spell models at rank 4 and above, including research, were kept a tight secret and not sold publicly.

As for information for high-ranking wizards, or even about Legends, it was the most taboo of all and was protected quite well. There was no way for Leylin to see it.

“Master Ernest has already given me a letter of recommendation. With this, I might be able to get the qualifications to get into a wizarding guild in the Dambrath capital...” Leylin's eyes were half-closed, and his brain continued to ponder different ideas.

“It's a pity that the outer seas cannot operate without me. Marquis Louis' patience must be at its limit, and his attacks of vengeance can come at any moment. And then there's also the partnership with the Barbarian Pirates...”

After a long while, Leylin sighed deeply. He obviously could not leave now. At the very least, he had to give Louis' family a firm push, but the day was near for that. Leylin's eyes blazed...

.....

“Trash! You're trash!” The ink, quill pen, parchment and all the miscellaneous items on the table were flung onto Viscount Tim's body.

“A year has passed! A whole year has passed, but what have you done? Not only have the few ships you have been sunk by him, he’s taken most of our trade! How did I get a son like you?” Marquis Louis exclaimed, the veins bursting out on his forehead in his fury.

“Father! My investigations show that there’s a large possibility that Leylin, the son of Baron Faulen, is the person behind the Scarlet Tigers. We can ask for a trial from the kingdom and catch him on charge of being a pirate... And then there’s the Barbarians. As long as we amass all our strength and attack Pirates’ Cove...”

Tim lowered his head, concealing the icy glint in his eyes and trying his best to persuade his father.

He hated Leylin and the Scarlet Pirates to the bone. Leylin seemed to have become his nemesis. Ever since the incident with the Black Tiger Pirates, the few shipping routes in his control had been fiercely attacked, and his few attempts at revenge were seen through when he was trying to implement them. He had metaphorically been slapped in the face, and the organisations under his control had all been mostly or completely lost.

He had lost the favour of his father, and even the servants began to treat him with less importance. Of course, there was also his most hated big brother, who ruthlessly poured salt on his wounds and took the opportunity to take over much of the businesses he had possessed. His brother was even brazenly recruiting his men!

Boom! A black crystal ink bottle was thrown at Tim’s head. Ink flowed down Tim’s forehead, mixing with blood and leaving him frozen.

“Are you stupid? Guilty of being a pirate? Do you have any evidence, or do you want to implicate us too?”

Marquis Louis’ yells were even louder, “And attacking Pirates’ Cove? That’s the biggest joke I’ve heard all year! That’s the place where all the dark organisations in the outer seas gather. Even if we attack, what good is it for us? We’ll even have to take on their counterattack...”

“Father!” At this moment, a gentle voice could be heard from behind the door. Marquis Louis immediately regained his calm, and the light in Tim’s eyes dimmed.

The door pulled open. His brother, who seemed to have been blessed by the gods from birth and possessed all the fortunes of the world, walked in.

“William!” Seeing the son of his first wife walk in, Marquis revealed a rare smile.

“My men have already found traces of the Scarlet Tigers, but they seem to be very alert and don’t stay on an island for long...” William smiled while he announced this, and Tim who was nearby felt like his face was burning.

“That’s normal. They have a powerful wizard who even escaped Boruj’s scrying and probes,” Marquis Louis muttered to himself, “It’s rumoured that Baron Jonas’ son, Leylin Faulen, has a wizard behind him. I suspect that the wizard could be part of the pirates!”

“Father, please give me control over the Black Skeletons. I am confident I’ll be able to destroy the Scarlet Tigers in 3 months!” William bowed, dealing Tim the final blow.

“Don’t underestimate them,” Marquis Louis regained his previous expression of a scheming man with deep foresight after his moment of rage had calmed.

Chapter 841 - Goddess Of Wealth

“We are all nobility, and can only follow the rules of the game between nobles...” Marquis Louis spoke slowly, “The Faulen Family was very weak before and had no real backing, which was originally a very good opportunity for us, but...”

Having said this, he glared at Tim, resulting in Tim lowering his head further.

The Faulen Family used to be [like duckweed floating through the air](#), but even then Marquis Louis did not dare to deal with them out in the open. He'd only sent out pirates in secret.

Uncertain, no good foundation

Furthermore, if those pirates had succeeded, the family would be annihilated!

But things could no longer be played that way. The Faulen Family now had more connections in the region, as well as backers. The strength they possessed was rapidly increasing. If he did not use all the strength he had at his disposal, Marquis Louis was not confident that he could wipe them out.

But was this possible? Even as a marquis of the kingdom, he could not attack the territory of another noble for no reason.

When it came to pirates, even with both the Black Skeletons and Tigersharks working together, Marquis Louis was still not

confident, especially since the opponent had a church on their island.

With such a large-scale pirate invasion. It would be hard to avoid confronting the church.

Furthermore, for those on the outer seas, who did not know that these were the two most powerful pirate groups under Marquis Louis? His goal was far too obvious.

“The timing’s gone! We’ve already lost the best time to attack...” Marquis Louis sighed, “The profits from these two goods, sugar and fish floss, really do measure up to the slave market...”

“Don’t worry, father! I’ll definitely get those two techniques!” William spoke with confidence, “The current situation is that we have many ships and shipping routes out in the open, but the Scarlet Tigers hide in the darkness where they have freedom. They can be the eyes and ears of the Faulen Family. On the surface neither side can make a move, and only rely on battling it out in the shadows. I’ll definitely annihilate the Scarlet Tigers and break off the opponent’s eyes and claws that exist in the darkness!”

Such profound insight immediately had Marquis Louis nodding.

“Very good. I’m relieved that you thought of that! Besides the Black Skeletons, I will order the Tigersharks to listen to you as well. The military fleet will await your orders at any time. You must destroy our enemies!”

At this moment, Marquis Louis' ruthlessness in staking everything on this was shown.

"Understood, father!" William's voice trembled slightly. To be able to have so much support made it clear that his status as the successor was unshakeable, and this was already the beginning of the shift of power.

"Also, the opponent has a powerful wizard. We can't ignore that! Wizard Boruj!"

"Lord Marquis!" An old man wearing grey wizard robes walked out from the shadows, eyes glinting with wisdom. The magic rays around him made those around him feel suffocated.

William and Tim hastily bowed towards the chief wizard of their family. Even Marquis Louis did not dare treat him with disrespect, "We will have to trouble you for this matter!"

"No problem!" Boruj's voice was hoarse, with the trace of a foreign and exotic accent, "I've long since wished to have a duel with that old rival whom I have yet to meet..."

"Henceforth, Wizard Boruj will accompany you until the Scarlet Tigers have been annihilated!" Marquis Louis stated.

"U-Understood!" This abrupt but pleasant surprise made William feel dizzy, and even his voice slightly trembled.

“Good! The future of our family will lie with you. Don’t disappoint me...”

Tim was standing at the side. Seeing the pretty picture of the father and son together made him feel like an outsider. He was roaring inside crazily, but could only put on a calm expression, not daring to show any of his resentment on his face.

.....

A giant golden ship slowly sailed to the dock of Port Venus.

This large ship had extremely extravagant decorations, and there was even a layer of metal that emitted golden luster. From afar, it looked like a ship made entirely of pure gold.

At the ship’s bow was a large emblem made of pure gold that shone with dazzling light. This was a symbol of the Goddess of Wealth, taking the form of a huge gold coin.

‘They’re truly nouveau riche! It would be a disservice for them if they didn’t ruthlessly spend this money.’ Although he thought this, Leylin didn’t dare show anything on his face. On the contrary, he had no choice but to put on his friendliest smile and welcome them.

There were others beside him. Baron Jonas, Madam Sarah, housekeeper Leon... Basically all the respected people here showed up. It was obvious how mind-blowing it was for them to see a Gold

Priest.

“Welcome to Port Venus. We hope you like it here, beautiful madam!” Against Leylin’s expectations, the Gold Priest who had arrived was a female!

She looked to be about 17 or 18, and her eyes seemed to be shining brightly. They held hints of the shrewdness unique to merchants, and her skin was as exquisite as ivory. She had a tender and splendid smile about her lips that made her look like the little girl next door. Her appearance made it difficult to associate her with the profession of a priest.

However, her brilliant high-ranking priest robe with vibrant colours as well as her powerful divine light, made her status clear.

“Hello, Sire Leylin! My name is Xena. This is a port brimming with hope. I sense the flow of a great origin of wealth...”

As was expected of the priest of the Goddess of Wealth, this was the first thing she mentioned.

“Haha... It’s great that Mistress Priest likes this place!” As the successor of the Faulen Family, as well as the delegate to represent her, Leylin elegantly extended his right hand helped her down.

“Powerful! Is this the power of a high-ranked priest?”

The instant their skin made contact, Leylin seemed to see a body

brimming with godly luster. All sorts of power from divine spells converged to form a high-pressure electrical network that kept her safe within it, giving off a sense of danger. This was the path of a priest. High-ranked priests prayed devoutly and borrowed the strength of gods to purify their souls, achieving the effect of existing in harmony with god. There was even the possibility of becoming a holy spirit!

Even the A.I. Chip was unable to scan her exact stats, and could only give the conclusion that she was extremely dangerous.

‘Rank 15! She’s definitely a high-ranked priest who’s at least rank 15!’ Leylin went on his guard. Meanwhile, she seemed to have noticed him spying and shot him a dark look.

“Oh, my apologies!” It was only at this point that Leylin realised he was holding on to her hand. This was rather impolite. However, as someone who had gone through various worlds, he could adapt quickly and immediately took care of the awkwardness.

After the banquet, Baron Jonas returned to the manor, which left Leylin alone to entertain the Gold Priest.

“It’s rumoured that Baron Jonas thinks highly of his first son and has been giving him more authority lately. Seems like it’s true!” Xena, who was on a mission set by the church, watched Leylin sitting opposite her, her eyes flashing with interest.

He seemed to have a unique temperament and a lot of confidence. The fact that a mere 16 year old could have such a

presence astonished her. Of course, he seemed to be a decent wizard, though it wasn't much in Xena's eyes.

For the rich and overbearing church, cultivating a few spellcasters was no issue. In the Goddess of Wealth's church, there was no lack of legendary wizards.

After all, for the wizards who readily spent gold coins at every turn, there was nothing more comfortable than being able to embrace the church of wealth's golden thighs.

"This porcelain is very high quality!" Xena looked at the cup in her hands. It had many complicated and intricate flower patterns, showing the exquisite craft of the elves.

"How about trying the cocoa from the eastern archipelago? It's said that this marvelous plant has the amazing effect of perking one up without harming the body..." Leylin smiled while pouring her a steaming hot cup of cocoa.

Xena had naturally seen this drink before. The production of cocoa beans was meagre, and on the continent it was sold at an astronomical price. Of course, what shocked her even more was Leylin's capability.

'Does that mean... he's already built up a connection with the eastern pirates?' Xena's eyes shone, and she then put down the beautiful porcelain cup in her hands.

“Mister Leylin, I’m sure you know my intentions in coming here. May I know what you think of establishing a church on the port?”

“I’m definitely not opposed to you joining in, but there’s actually a plan already for the Port Venus. Every plot of land has its own function... of course, it’s not a problem to squeeze out a section, but...” Leylin had a standard smile on his face.

“The Goddess of Wealth will not mistreat any follower of hers!” Xena placed a golden card on the table, “This is a proof for the withdrawal of money. With it, you can exchange 10 000 kronas from any church of wealth. Treat it as the capital for buying this land!”

Rich and overbearing, Leylin now knew what rich and overbearing truly meant! The church of the Goddess of Wealth was truly rich, unlike the stingy Tapris who probably wasn’t even willing to pay rent.

Of course, this was a problem left behind from Baron Jonas’ time. This would not happen again with Leylin in charge.

“Then there aren’t any other problems. The city hall will mark out the land tomorrow!” Leylin smiled gently, a hand taking and keeping the golden card on the table without batting an eyelid.

The Goddess of Wealth generously contributed her own divine realm, providing currency storage services. With her divine force as a mark against fraud, trying to trick anyone in this was just shooting oneself in the foot.

However, with this, there were fees to pay if people wanted to store their money with her. Then again, this was to be expected from a goddess even greedier than a dragon.

Chapter 842 - Agreement

“Apart from the issue with the church, there is also another matter which is related to why I came...” Xena’s gaze pierced straight into Leylin.

‘Finally, here it comes,’ He thought inwardly. He had long felt that as his profits from his two avenues of trade grew greater and greater, he would eventually attract the attention of larger organisations.

As this moment had come, his earlier alliances to protect his profits were no longer of any use. In reality, Leylin had already planned in his heart to exchange his techniques with them. He’d long since understood the rules of the game in this world, and that he could no longer maintain a monopoly by virtue of his own strength.

He was already surprised that he was able to gobble up a year’s worth of profiteering. Now, he would need to find a sufficiently powerful backer to sell his techniques to. From this point of view, the church of wealth was evidently a rather good option.

“Is it the fish floss and white sugar?” Leylin directly pointed it out.

“Yes, as well as you!” Xena’s eyes were filled with humour, “Compared to those two techniques, the person who invented them is much more worthy of our consideration. You have Midas’ touch!”

“Me!” Leylin pointed at himself, feeling a little ridiculous. Secretly, however, he was constantly on guard and a little apprehensive. It looked like he had been acting too conspicuously recently.

For now, Xena was only interested in his mind, but what if she discovered more things about him?

As he thought about it, Leylin suddenly made up his mind. After he resolved the issue with Marquis Louis, he had to disappear for a while. Otherwise, once he received the attention of even more deities, his troubles would certainly grow.

“These two techniques came about due to luck. I have always loved reading books, and discovered the invention from the writings of the ancients by chance. I’m also very thankful to my father as well, as he allowed my nonsense and even specially bought some craftsmen slaves for me...”

Leylin felt a magic undulation sweep across him, clearly trying to find out whether he was lying. Although Xena’s action was performed in secret, how could he possibly not notice it? He raged in his heart, but on the surface he did not make a single sound.

His expression made Xena rather suspicious, and as she felt the feedback from her divine spell, she grew even more confused.

‘It can’t be, he’s telling me the truth?’ Xena felt a little disappointed, but did not continue to discuss the matter of the two

trades with Leylin. No matter how one looked at it, the profits from the fish floss and white sugar were absolutely mind boggling. If she could not stick her hand in these two trade rivers which were overflowing with gold, she was sure to lose Waukeen's favour, and would be replaced with other priests of gold.

Leylin's nature and the A.I. Chip's adjustments were more than enough to hide information from a high-ranking priest. Looking at Xena's crestfallen face, Leylin inwardly smiled to himself, but his expression was still as serious as ever.

"Then, let's discuss the issue of the the two trades."

"Say it! How many gold coins do you want to give me the techniques?" Xena said with a rich and powerful air, suppressing her emotions completely.

"The entire curing process of fish floss, as well as the can sealing method and even the skilled craftsmen can all be given to you for 100,000 gold pieces!"

For Leylin, it was necessary to mass produce things like fish floss. The greater the volume he was able to sell, the more lucrative it would be. The capital and investment necessary was enormous, and the technique was not particularly sophisticated. After a few years it was sure to be imitated, so it was better to sell it off in one go.

"100,000 gold pieces?!" Xena bit her lip.

From her view, this price was on the high side. However if skilled

craftsmen and the sealing technique were included, then it was much more worth it.

The crucial point was the sealing technique that Leylin used. Xena could immediately see the advantage in using the sealing jar to preserve food for a long time. Even if it wasn't used for fish floss, it was enough for her to make a profit.

So what if this industry needed a lot of initial investment? For the church of wealth who threw money at all their problems, that would never become an issue.

“This price is really far too high, unless you include the technique used to refine white sugar as well...” Although she had already inwardly agreed to the deal, she had a forced smile on her face, and on the surface she looked like she was moments away from throwing a tantrum.

“The white sugar purification technique?” Leylin muttered to himself. This was a different technique to the fish floss, and he was secretive about it as there were several key steps to making it.

Additionally, it did not require a big production line or much investment, and it was a business that he could continue in the long-term.

The white sugar trade brought in over half of the Faulen Family's income, and was like an inexhaustible gold mine! As their profits grew, naturally the number of sharks that were attracted by it also grew. This was something that Leylin understood very well.

“Well?” Xena clearly seemed to understand the difference between the two techniques, and her eyes flashed in anticipation.

“This is...” Leylin’s expression looked as if he was mired in difficulty, and his fingers began to involuntarily drum on the table. Xena’s heart seemed to also throb along to the rhythmic tapping sounds.

‘Why... Why did I do that?’ Xena’s face seemed to flush red as she inwardly chastised herself.

However, Leylin looked at her softly. “The purification technique for white sugar cannot be sold to you. However, can we discuss the matters of the church of wealth?”

“The church of wealth?”

“Yes! For example, how many priests you will dispatch here, how many paladins, and other matters like that...” Leylin smiled like a crafty fox, leaving Xena feeling as if she had met the most unreasonable devil in her career.

After a while, Xena bid farewell and left, looking as if she had been driven to distraction.

“I’ll need to carefully consider your proposal!” were the words she left behind.

As he watched many priests and paladins escorting the figure below him, Leylin's lips slowly curved into a smile.

As a matter of fact, his proposal was not complicated. It was only to allow the church of wealth to become a partner in the business, and gradually pass on the technique over three years, enough time for the Faulens to fill their own coffers.

Leylin had additionally emphasised a clause in their agreement—If Faulen Island came under attack, the church of wealth would have to send out priests and paladins to fight alongside his guards.

This was practically a request for the church's protection. Even if they only sent out a low-ranking priest, it would be enough. After all, even Marquis Louis would not dare to declare war on the church of wealth unless he was tired of living.

Leylin had also heard several rumors which made it necessary for him to protect his own lair. Binding the church of wealth to his chariot of war was undoubtedly the safest thing for him to do.

Naturally, he would not have unrealistic expectations of the church protecting the Scarlet Tigers as well. Even if Marquis Louis wanted a truce, Leylin was not willing to agree. Without enough enemies and flesh, how could he fulfil the Devilblood Dagger's needs and quickly advance?

‘The clause is not too harsh, and I believe that in the end, this Gold Priest won't be able to withstand the temptation...’ Leylin's eyes continued to flash, ‘Once the church of wealth puts down

their roots here, perhaps my plans can begin...’

After returning to his villa, Leylin waved his hand at Claire and her sister, who had faces full of anticipation, “I won’t need you here for now, leave first!”

“Y–yes, young master!” The sisters had a secretly bitter expression on their faces but did not dare to say much as they meekly left the room.

“Come out!” Leylin looked towards the window sill. For a moment, it seemed as if no one was there and the window was tightly shut, without even a small crack.

However, a shadow slowly emerged from the darkness, and the outline of a curvy body could be seen. The owner of this body was a half-drow, who wore the tight-fitting clothes of an assassin and a thief. “Master!” she immediately knelt down.

“I’m afraid that your stealth is no worse off than some middle-ranking assassins!” In the World of Gods, a middle-ranked class was a formidable Professional of over rank 10. Such an assessment coming from Leylin was indeed high praise. Perhaps this half-drow had practised like she was mad after shedding her past humiliating identity, and made great progress.

Karen currently had the heavy responsibility of communicating between Leylin and the Scarlet Tigers.

“Master, we looted two more merchant ships from the Baltic archipelago this month, the estimated profits are about 5000 gold pieces. Additionally, Miss Isabel has acted according to your plan and begun to intentionally leak our whereabouts...” Karen reported respectfully.

“What about the Barbarians?”

“I have already notified them and they have promised to act when the agreed time comes.” How could Leylin not take advantage of the assistance the Barbarians could offer to recklessly fight Marquis Louis?

“Mm, even so, we would increase our success rate if we could plant a high-ranking spy in their camp...” Leylin said, seemingly with a sigh.

“Master! This humble servant deserves death. The thieves and spies that were previously sent to the Baltic archipelago in the past all seemed to have been uprooted, and the ones that are left can only divulge ordinary information...” Karen immediately begged for forgiveness. Only after working for Leylin for so long did she realise how deeply terrifying he was.

Compared to this master, those pure-blooded drows in the Underdark seemed extremely kind-hearted!

“The reason I said that was not to blame you,” Leylin shook his head, thinking that his servant’s cowardice was not a good thing at all.

Chapter 843 - Mouthpiece

“Set out immediately towards the Baltic archipelago, and find someone for me,” Leylin could not help but to get Karen’s attention, as he saw the bewildered expression on her face.

“Who?” Karen was surprised. Could it be that the master had made other preparations over there? Did this mean that he had lost trust in her? Once she thought of the consequences of being abandoned, Karen involuntarily began to tremble.

That display made Leylin inwardly laugh to himself.

“Go and find Viscount Tim, and tell him the truth about who you are. In addition, tell him that I am willing to form an alliance with him and help him become a marquis!” Leylin laughed coldly, as if he were the devil.

“Viscount Tim?” Karen was shocked, and couldn’t help but to lift her head up. She had heard many times about the Faulen family’s affairs after joining Leylin’s troops, and she certainly knew that Viscount Tim had been the main ringleader in coveting the Faulen Island’s territory.

This viscount was also the Scarlet Tigers’ biggest enemy right from the start, so how could they suddenly shake hands and talk of peace?

“Carry out the order,” Leylin waved his hand. Karen respectfully bowed, disappearing into the darkness.

“That’s politics for you... The enemy of my enemy is a friend, and no matter how one fought to the death against the other the previous day, to the point of wanting to directly kill each other, one must join hands against the common enemy all the same...”

Although the ambushed spies in the Baltic archipelago could only divulge the most basic of information, Leylin could still see a lot of things in them. For example, the discord between Marquis Louis and Viscount Tim, as well as the eldest son William’s outstanding performance.

According to Leylin’s understanding of human nature, he had over a 50% chance of success to rope in Viscount Tim., a chance great enough for him to try and grab.

Even if he failed, he would not suffer any losses, right?

.....

A few days later, The Gold Priest Xena eventually accepted Leylin’s conditions and signed the agreement. She received the sugar refining technique under the condition that they would protect the Faulen family for 3 years.

Both sides were very satisfied with their deal, and perhaps it would take a long time for both their profits and losses to come to light.

When all of these matters had been accomplished, a resplendent church had been erected at Port Venus.

As she had money, Xena, that prodigious bitch, seemed to simply use gold coins to accelerate the progress. Naturally, it had shockingly good results. The main body was up within ten days, several times faster than Leylin's construction of the city hall.

Naturally, this could not have happened with the efforts of the priests. As they could recover their divine skills just by praying every day, they were not afraid of generously using their skills to support the construction. Leylin could only look on in envy.

On the day that the construction was complete, Xena personally prayed and brought down the divine grace of the Goddess of Wealth.

Although the goddess herself did not appear, just being able to give all her followers in the port some additional luck and eloquence, as well as quick calculation abilities, was enough for those fellows to earn enough to fill their coffers in the future.

Naturally, the divine grace which was as boundless as the sea, and the imposing divine might, left a deep impression on Leylin.

The Goddess of Wealth was just a mid-ranked god, and shared the same status as a rank 8 of the Magus World. However, the feeling she gave Leylin was far more terrifying than many rank 8 entities.

Perhaps this was because it was her home turf, but it still gave Leylin an enormous shock. The powerful qualitative change that occurred when the power of faith was united with the body's power of laws greatly inspired him.

There were still a few discordant voices in the crowd.

The priests of the God of Suffering did not say much; his believers were of the lower classes, such as slaves and labourers, as well as others like farmers. They simply did not care about a goddess of merchants, because in reality the total of their belongings did not even add up to a single gold piece!

However, for the Bishop of the God of Knowledge, Tapris, having priests of the Goddess of Wealth stationed here was a great challenge. Although he still sent people over to congratulate them, he turned a cold shoulder to Baron Jonas.

Leylin and Baron Jonas completely ignored his attitude. As a representative of the nonreligious royalty, there were some essential benefits that they would never relinquish, and would even defend to the death.

Leylin stayed there for a while, until the transaction involving the fish floss technique had been completed and Port Venus was back on track. Only then did he retreat back into his laboratory.

The azure sea sprayed stinging salt and a soothing sea breeze at the same time. A black shadow whizzed past, leaving ripples on the sea surface behind it on its way.

An enormous fleet of pirate ships was quietly moored on the horizon, a terrifying skull and dagger flag the colour of blood on their flagpoles. The Scarlet Tigers had made a name for themselves in the nearby region, and their strength began to approach that of the three great pirate crews.

It was rumoured that the captain of that pirate crew, the Scarlet Witch, was from the abyss of evil, and even enjoyed bathing in the fresh blood of her enemies. Just the mention of her name could make small children cry fearfully at night.

However, the rumoured Scarlet Witch, Leylin's cousin Isabel, stood with the other high-ranking pirates on the deck, as if waiting for their true captain to appear.

"You've worked hard!" Leylin's figure slowly descended in the howling wind. He first nodded at his pirate crew, then turned to face his own cousin. Afterwards, his brow slowly furrowed.

As she had sacrificed a great deal of blood and flesh, Isabel's power had improved very quickly, and she was now almost a rank 15 high-ranking Professional. She was the number one combatant under him.

At the same time however, Isabel's demonisation had also grown even more serious.

Although her appearance was still human, occasionally she emitted an extremely demonic and icy aura, which was terrifyingly

evil. It was enough for weaker people to fall into a dead faint if they got too close to her.

As a result, even the most ferocious pirates did not dare to get close to Isabel.

“Our people have all been set up according to your plan,” Isabel had no interest in the fearful gazes from the others, and arrived at Leylin’s side.

“You’ve done very well,” Leylin captured Isabel’s small hand. Although it was as cold as ice, there was a touch of warmth to it that still belonged to the living.

“Ronald, come to the captain’s room. I need to hear your latest report,” Leylin looked towards Ronald, who immediately bowed and obeyed his order.

Of all the mates, he was the one with the best foundation. He even had some ability at leadership, something that had caught Leylin’s attention. His current position had slowly been elevated above that of Cyclops, and he had become Leylin’s top talent apart from Isabel.

Naturally, Leylin did not treat his old subordinates badly, and had given them a ship and 10 pirates. They were promoted to middle-ranked leaders and had awe-inspiring prestige, but now that their status had been upgraded, their thoughts also seemed to change a little.

After the pirates on the deck all left after reading the mood, Leylin spoke in a low voice to Isabel, “If you make the decision, then I still have ways to get rid of the demonic transformation of your body. However if you really wait until the transformation is complete, then I fear you will directly descend into the abyss, and your soul will never receive salvation...”

Isabel played with her long hair. Only in front of Leylin would she do these little feminine actions.

“After I give up my power, how do I get revenge on my enemies? I made a vow, that every day I live I will seek the deaths of my enemy to comfort the souls of my family...” Listening to what Isabel said, Leylin could only fall into a gloomy mood. His cousin’s character was so strong that it could give him a headache.

“Alright, since we have nothing left to do after this battle, we can take our time to consider how to resolve it. I only hope that we aren’t too late...” Leylin looked towards the sky where clouds were slowly gathering, heralding the arrival of a storm.

“My sword has long been thirsting for blood...” His cousin stood next to him just like a valkyrie.

.....

“Damn! Damn! Damn!” Viscount Tim cursed as he slammed the bedroom door handle, holding an bottle of empty bottle of rum.

Those serving maids? He had long roared at them to leave.

“One day! One day, I’ll make all of you who despise and insult me pay the price!” Thinking back to those looks of contempt he had received recently, Viscount Tim’s mood became even worse.

“Mm? Who is it? Didn’t I say before, to all get out of my sight...”

Viscount Tim’s voice stopped, because the person he had discovered standing in his bedroom was not a maid, but a thief.

“The Scarlet Tiger pirate crew gives you our greetings!” This thief had a sweet voice that was pleasant to the ears, and her figure was very good.

Viscount Tim looked at her from head to toe, and his expression changed completely. He even looked like he had woken up from his drunken stupor. Scarlet Tiger? Were they not his enemies?

“Haha... Are you here to take my life?” Tim took a few steps back, and his dark heart was filled with hate. If it was his father and William’s place, that thief would be chopped to pieces before she could get this close to them. Only here in this neglected second son’s house could an assassin easily step through.

However, if he could fight for a little more time, the guards would notice something was amiss and immediately rush through.

“No, we’re here to help you! You, do you wish to become a

Marquis?” The temptation of a devil poured out from Karen’s lips.

“Marquis?” Tim’s expression changed greatly, and he immediately shut his bedroom door with a dark expression.

Chapter 844 - Pirates Tide

“Go on! You were sent by William, weren’t you. What are you plotting?” Tim immediately sat down to one side.

“Haha... I’m afraid that your brother can’t order me around. If you want to confirm my identity, how about this?” Karen lifted her hand, and a scroll covered in the Scarlet Tiger’s skull and dagger seal flew directly to Tim.

“It really is you people...” Tim touched the unique imprint on the parchment in disbelief, his eyes slowly growing as round as saucers.

“What do you want?” Without quite knowing why, Tim’s heart began to beat wildly.

“Didn’t I say before? We’re going to help you become the marquis, my lord,” Karen smiled.

“What sort of joke is this, William is still here, and apart from him there’s still...” Tim mumbled.

“Then just let them all die,” Karen’s words were filled with venom.

“Let them all die!” Tim bonelessly flopped onto his chair as he heard her speak his mind, but his eyes actually shone brightly.

“You want me to work undercover and sell out my own family?”
He asked slowly.

“That depends on your decision. What do you want, a broken family? Or the glory and power that your brother William currently holds?”

Karen could tell that Tim never really had a choice.

The night wind blew through the window, and the curtains continued to wave in the breeze. However, there was someone missing from their earlier position in front of the window. After a long time sitting uneasily in his chair, Tim felt dizzy and confused. However, an idea had seeded itself deep within his mind.

‘That’s right. If I can’t have it, you can’t either! I’ll destroy everything, this entire Baltic archipelago should belong to me!’ Under the moonlight, Tim’s back seemed to have twisted demonically.

.....

“Master, everything went smoothly. Tim also gave us the route maps of the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates.” Tim had completely revealed Marquis Louis’ plan to them; the forces he was mobilising, William’s route, even the news of the wizard Boruj’s return.

“Ah, is this Tim crazy?” Isabel stood next to Leylin, looking at the

final part of the parchment which held the map of the entire Baltic archipelago. He had completely betrayed his family and even given them the defenses of the marquis' house.

“Desperate and crazy people can be unreasonable like this. He clearly knows that his family is the only thing left that he can rely on, but he willingly wants to destroy it. It's really too funny...” Karen knelt down even lower, and did not dare to look Leylin in the eye.

Although she had a rather intimate relationship with this master of hers, she realised that she couldn't even begin to understand Leylin yet. For the sake of benefits, even his enemies became his allies, and the ability to accurately grasp someone's heart made him seem like a demon wearing human skin.

Indeed, a demon! In Karen's heart, perhaps only the Archdevil of the 9th level of hell would have such a cold and cruel mentality.

“What, are you afraid of me?” Even this light thought was discovered by Leylin, and his casual way of asking made Karen tremble all over.

“No! No, your servant was just concerned that Viscount Tim would go back on his word. After all, nobles are not to be trusted. Even if we succeed, I fear that he will act as a witness against us...” Karen immediately replied.

“Before William dies, the likelihood of Tim going back to their side is very small,” Leylin did not get angry after discovering his

servant's fearful state of mind, it was a very normal reaction.

Only in front of the Scarlet Tigers did Leylin abandon his aristocratic airs, showing his true self to the crowd. Because of it, he had earned the other pirates' genuine awe and fear. Were Isabel not slowly transforming into a demon in body and mind, perhaps even she would feel fearful and alienated by him.

"After we succeed, whether Tim will ask for help from the Dambrath Kingdom or testify against us..." Leylin laughed gently, "Did I let you leave behind any evidence or information that points towards me?"

"No," Karen dimly began to realise.

"So from beginning to the end, this entire matter is only related to the Scarlet Tigers and Tim. Is Tim willing to gamble away his future and be hanged for the crime, just to testify against a bunch of pirates?"

"Master is wise!" Karen only understood at this moment how deeply Leylin had thought about everything.

"Not only that... Louis and William are the marquis and the marquis' heir, even containing royal blood. The Baltic archipelago is the marquis' fiefdom, do you really think we can go swaggering in after disposing of them both and take it over?"

"If that happened, the king would lose his mind and attack us!"

“That’s right, so we should at least support a puppet agent on the surface, and Tim is rather suitable, is he not?” Leylin folded his hands, “With him there, then we can cover up the whole matter as a fight between a noble family’s sons, and isn’t this sort of thing common in the Kingdom?”

“This would let his majesty and the royal family save face, and although they will continue to resent us, the possibility of them wasting manpower and resources to exterminate us will be very low.”

“Your servant understands...” Karen’s face was still rather shocked as she respectfully withdrew. It was clear that Leylin’s view extended further into the future than she had realised.

‘Don’t tell me that all humans are as full of convoluted schemes and foresight as him? The extent of this plot, perhaps even those Matriarchs of the Underdark...’ Karen left with a heavy heart.

Leylin was comforting his cousin, “I know your family’s debt of blood includes Tim’s. Don’t worry, when the time is ripe he WILL pay the price...”

“There isn’t a trace of doubt in my mind,” Isabel looked deeply into Leylin’s eyes, “Additionally, I would like to finish him off myself...”

“No problem, I can leave William to you,” Leylin’s eyes flashed coldly, “Notify the Barbarians as well, this time we will eliminate

their naval force in one fell swoop!”

A grey falcon with a scroll tied to its leg disappeared into the sky, as quickly as a flash of grey lightning. With this sort of raptor-like speed and flight, it would only take half a night to reach Pirates’ Cove.

A strong breeze flowed past, lifting the heavy curtains.

“What an adorable little fellow, haha...” Madam Tillen caressed its ash-grey beak, and retrieved the message tied to its feet. After glancing through the message, she turned to the Barbarians’ captain in her room, “The operation can begin!”

Several loud grunting sounds could be heard. An enormous hand attached to an arm the size of an entire baby was grasping a huge goblet filled to the brim with golden spirits.

Odge’s throat was gulping down the drink, and occasionally some liquor would leak out from the corners of his mouth and flow down his prickly beard.

“Boruj, Boruj, Boruj! I’ll turn your skull into a wine glass!” Odge growled, snatching up the enormous saber. A powerful spell glinted on the swordpoint.

“Send the order, we act now!” Odge roared, and the two barbarian warriors outside immediately flew out.

Pirates' Cove immediately burst into a flurry of activity. Under the command of their captain, teams of barbarian warriors boarded their ships in an orderly manner, amongst them shamans who wore colourful feathers and had painted faces.

They were the rare spellcasters of the barbarian tribe, and one could tell Odge's resolve and caution from how all of them had been dispatched.

"The Pirates' Tide! It's similar to the last Pirates' Tide that happened decades ago..." The barbarian pirate crew did not consist solely of barbarians. As the head of the Dark Alliance in the outer seas, they had many pirates under them of other races which were all currently taking action with them. Several thousand ships sailed out from Pirates' Cove, which gave off a rather chilling feeling.

"I smell killing, and the plot is afoot... This festival will please our lord greatly!" In a dark corner, the Cyric priest murmured to himself, next to him the bent figure of the bishop from before.

"Prepare your men to assassinate the leaders of both sides, and let the chaos grow even more turbulent!" After this reshuffling of the pirate organisations, the situation in the outer sea would change greatly. However, this bishop's purpose was greater than that.

All he asked was for there to be chaos! After the chaotic battle, no matter who rose to the top, they would represent order. However, this would clearly displease the God of Murder, as he only wanted an endlessly chaotic outer sea, full of all kinds of murder and

conspiracies.

Murder and plots were Cyric's most favourite things. If they could accomplish this, then he was bound to receive the grace of his god. He would advance by 1 or 2 ranks as a priest at the very least, and even receive other advantages. Compared to that, how could allowing the entire outer sea wither even compare?

"As you command!" The priest now understood the tip of the bishop's plot. Neither their past neutrality nor the current assassinations mattered, all that was left was a sacrifice of chaos and death!

These sorts of methods obviously brought great pleasure and excitement to him. With high spirits, the priest's body slowly melded into the shadows, leaving behind the bishop who watched the sails alone.

Chapter 845 - Dawn Of Battle

“Young master! We’ve received word that those Barbarians at Pirates’ Cove are acting strangely!” It was very unlikely for such a large-scale shift in manpower to be hidden from other organisations. William got a report quite quickly.

“The Barbarians? Get me a map of the sea!” William put down the copper telescope. The feeling of possessing so much power left him in a marvellous mood.

Under him was a huge three-masted ship that was over 300m long, able to displace 500 metric tons of water when sailing. The terrifying battleship, its deck and hull coated in magic armour, was a symbol of invincibility and tyranny in the outer seas.

A flag with a sinister black skull on it flapped around in the wind, the mark of the Black Skeletons. This was one of the three great pirate crews of the outer seas of Dambrath, with over 300 elites and ten large battleships. Their flagship had been remodelled with magic!

At this moment, a young pirate walked over, opening up an intricate map next to William.

“You’ve worked hard, Captain Crowe!” William nodded politely.

Captain Crowe had translucent fair skin and a tall forehead, the bridge of his nose long and straight as a snowy mountain. His eyes were long and narrow, as were his proportionate eyebrows, and he

had a delicate yet seductive aura.

However, William did not dare underestimate him. Crowe was a high-ranked Professional exceeding rank 15, his outer appearance only the effect of his bloodline.

Indeed, this was someone with a bloodline. His powers stemmed not only from his Profession, but also his innate constitution. The power he inherited from his bloodline allowed him to possess greater vitality than the average human, and the bloodline itself would awaken spell-like abilities as he grew.

However, bloodlines had limitations as well. He could only cast from a limited pool of spells, and there was a limit to the number of uses.

However, even the simplest rank 0 spell was useful for high-ranked warriors. On top of that, his bloodline allowed him to cast spells so quickly that defending against them was pointless.

It caused many to describe bloodline holders as lucky people who possessed gifts from their ancestors. Crowe himself had a high grade of bloodline ,but he was also a knight that was over rank 15. Still, the influence of his ancestor's bloodline naturally lent to a savagery and violence that was in his very genes. He was like a devil king in the outer seas.

However, the Black Skeletons were subservient to Marquis Louis, and Crowe had a great attitude towards William. It could have to do with the high-ranking wizard by his side.

While similarly ranked as Professionals, a wizard far exceeded knights and bloodline holders in power. Perhaps, given time to prepare, a high-ranked wizard could contend against several enemies of their rank.

As a nobility of the seas, William knew these basic things well. After using a vernier caliper and making marks, he stowed the map away. “They set off from Pirates’ Cove just yesterday. Based on the distance, it’ll take them at least two days to reach the battlefield. We should be able to exterminate the Scarlet Tigers in that time...”

“When the time comes, please leave the Scarlet Witch to me!” Crowe bowed elegantly, seeming like a refined noble. It was impossible to connect him to piracy on the seas.

“No problem!” William frowned, but quickly smoothed out his expression. He stood on deck, watching the over 30 battleships behind him, “Send down the command that we are to increase our speed, we should strive to annihilate the Scarlet Tigers within a day!”

The flag bearer immediately got up to the observation deck and sent down the order. The vessels sped up, creating a spectacular sight. Most of the ships belonged to the Black Skeletons, and only a few were marked with the symbol of the Tigershark Pirates.

However, William would not underestimate them because of that, There were many white lines next to the fleet, the dorsal fins of many tigersharks. They looked like innumerable fish scales that

emitted a dark luster in the sunlight.

This was a group of tamed tigersharks, the main force of the Tigershark Pirates! A formation of them spelled disaster in the deep seas, easily able to flip ships over and rip the flesh off their enemies from the waters.

“Keke... seems like Citamo’s little darlings are already impatient, or am I wrong?” Crowe coquettishly greeted a sharkman behind him.

“I want to rip off every bone of the body of that Leylin, inch by inch. I’ll then let my children share every drop of flesh and blood on his body...” Citamo was a hybrid between a shark and a human. His outer skin was like the solid cartilage of a shark, and his smile revealed a row of sawtooth-like teeth. The corners of his lips extended all the way to his ears.

Such a huge mouth could easily swallow a full-grown man.

William gulped, “It’s rumoured that the Tigershark Pirates and Merfolk Pirates have connections. After the Merfolk Pirates were annihilated, Citamo even tried to cause trouble for the Scarlet Tigers, but the opponent fled...”

“The captain of the Merfolk Pirates was a bastard of yours, no? Don’t worry, the enemy won’t be able to run!” Crowe’s eyes had a bloody glint in them as he ruthlessly revealed the secret.

“Crowe! Once the battle’s over, I’ll wring your head off!” Citamo widened his mouth, revealing a terrifying tongue with sharp barbed tips on them, “I’ve long since wanted to taste a bloodline holder...”

“Enough!” An aged voice sounded just as William furrowed his brows and was about to stop the fight. Boruj slowly strolled to the deck, leaning on a slender magic staff.

While he looked like a shrivelled old man who already had a foot in the coffin, and there was only a little bit of light in his eyes, Crowe and Citamo both did not dare underestimate him. This was a high-ranked wizard, a spellcaster who possessed immense strength! No matter where he went, he would be greeted with reverence.

“Master Boruj, you’re just in time!” With Boruj’s arrival, William was more confident.

“I hope you can use Sending to inform the naval commander that he doesn’t need to come over here. He’ll just have to carry on stalling that trash at Pirates’ Cove for a while...” William’s eyes now held rays of wisdom, “Though they definitely won’t be able to make it to the battle, I still feel uneasy...”

Sending was only a communication spell that high-ranked wizards used. The distance it allowed and its convenience far surpassed old methods. Of course, Leylin was still unable to use this as he was still too low-ranked.

“Don’t worry,” Boruj looked hard at the two pirate captains and headed back to the hold of the ship.

“I still have some thoughts on the upcoming massacre, I invite the two of you to discuss this together...” As if not seeing the dark look in their eyes, William put on his sincerest smile and called for Crowe and Citamo.

.....

As they were planning for the battle, Leylin’s various channels gave him an unceasing stream of intel.

“Mm. William’s main force is two large pirate groups. He’s protected by the high-ranked wizard, Boruj, and they’ve already reached the Strait of Storms?” Leylin looked at the gigantic map on the wall and stuck a few flags on it.

“Yes. Marquis Louis’ slaving fleet has already shifted towards the Hygar Islands, blocking the path that the Barbarians are sure to pass by. It’ll take a long time for victory to be decided between them...”

Only Isabel and Ronald were beside Leylin, even Karen had been sent out. Evidently, this was a military meet for those of high rank..

“Good. As we expected, they sent out their last resort...” Leylin clapped his hands, “Is that stuff prepared yet?”

“We’ve already made contact with the people there. They delivered all the goods right away once we paid them their gold. We’re currently storing it here...” Ronald’s voice trembled slightly as he said this. While he had talent as a commander, he was still shocked by Leylin’s risky actions.

“Act based on the plan. Remember to keep it a secret! Let’s go out and see the leader of the other pirates...” Leylin clapped his hands and decided the fate of many people, and then walked out as if it was nothing at all.

“With a wave of his hand, he can take the lives of tens of thousands at one go and even show no remorse. Is this the way the truly powerful behave?” Ronald muttered to himself as he followed Leylin.

Lights illuminated the hall atop the Scarlet Tiger. Numerous pirate leaders stood at the two sides of the long table, with the elites and trusted aides behind them.

“Boss!” Boss!” After having brought Isabel and Ronald inside, Leylin occupied the host’s seat as he took a quick look around. The Scarlet Tigers had grown to over 500 men strong in the past year, even if they didn’t have many elites. Many familiar and unfamiliar faces appeared in front of him.

“I’ve gathered you here today because we are going to deal with the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates!” Leylin’s voice was low as he announced his objective.

The moment the words came out, there was a slight commotion below. One-eyed Dragon, Hawk, and the rest that Leylin was more familiar with merely whispered, while the rest of the pirates grew noisy.

Chapter 846 - Barren Island

“Boss, why do we have to go against the Black Skeletons and Tigersharks? Marquis Louis and the Baltic archipelago are behind them, and we’re no match for THEM... Isn’t it better to stay out of the way like we did in the past? The sea is so vast. They can’t find us...” A pirate who looked kind stood out.

“Are you questioning my decision, Stalker?” Leylin’s voice was low, immediately causing the hall to turn chilly.

This was the disadvantage of staying at Port Venus and avoiding trouble. Since he controlled the pirates from the shadows most of the time, he still didn’t have enough of a grasp on them. This was especially true of those like Stalker who’d just joined. He’d originally commanded a few ships himself, and had never experienced how brutal and callous Leylin could be. There were things he did not understand.

Stalker froze, but still mumbled everything out anyway, “I obviously wouldn’t want to do that, but we have to worry about our brothers...”

“Wouldn’t want to? So that means you’ll still do it?” Leylin chuckled, a flash of lightning shooting out of his hands.

With his strength as a rank 9 wizard, plentiful battle experiences, and excellent techniques, taking care of a Professional merely about rank 10 could be done in an instant.

Crackle! Amidst the fierce electric currents, Stalker turned into a few portions of charred ash.

“Ah... Head!” “What are you doing?”

The trusted aide standing behind Stalker brought out his curved knife in his grief, but was immediately drowned out by Ronald's underlings.

Leylin played with the electric currents that struck fear into the hearts of the pirates, leaving them trembling in their fright. He then ordered in leisure from his seat, “Ronald, go and take over their ship!”

“Understood, Captain!” Ronald immediately brought his men and left, leaving behind a group of pirate leaders quivering at their seats. It was only at this point that they remembered the Scarlet Tigers had been established with the captain's ruthlessness and cruelty.

They had to carry out his orders with determination. The only other option was being purged callously!

Shouts could be heard, and there was some chaos in the distance but Leylin didn't care. Sensing the wordless communication amongst his subordinates, He snickered inside, ‘As expected, the truly troublesome ones aren't hot-blooded. There are more of those who only pay lip service...’

After a year of work, the batch of people under Leylin had all grown rich, gaining control over certain sections. They were now smalltime leaders themselves.

Due to a shortage of manpower, Isabel and Ronald had no choice but to hand over some power to others, which then led to a few other hidden leaders amongst the pirates. Leylin kept them under control by pressuring them with his power. While this made sure that they wouldn't dare rebel, the hatred in their hearts increased by the day.

After the fools who had the guts to speak out all died, the only resistance was left hidden in the shadows. It was alright if they only paid lip service, but how many out of these people had contact with Marquis Louis and betrayed him, turning into spies?

Leylin sneered on the inside. On the surface, the opponent's strength far exceeded his, even in terms of his noble status.

This was the loneliness at the top of the pyramid. Worldly matters were like water that would wash away the people beside him, the mere thought of like-minded companions from the past difficult to remember.

'But even if you work from the shadows, you can't stop me.' Leylin was unfeeling and merciless.

"Captain! Stalker's ship has been cleaned out!" At this moment, Ronald pushed the door open and walked in hurriedly, bloodstains still on his body. "We found some assassins from the church of

murder on it, and this too!” A few noble emblems with blood on them were flung to the long table.

“This... It’s the family emblem of Marquis Louis!” Someone who recognised it yelled.

“Hang all the assassins. Kill all of Stalker’s assistants. Let them know what the punishment for treachery is!” Leylin instructed calmly, deciding the life and death of tens of people in an instant.

“Now, do you have any other opinions?” Being glanced at by Leylin’s lightning-like eyes, the many leaders immediately lowered their heads, having no courage to meet his gaze.

.....

After the meeting was adjourned, Leylin might have used his might to forcefully allocate tasks, but the undercurrents still flowed. A few suspicious figures sneakily met up at the bottom of a ship’s hold in the deep night.

“Nondetection” An expensive scroll was torn, and once the rays of light from the spell filled the area, the people finally heaved a sigh of relief.

“Is this place safe?” One of them asked with a rough voice.

“I spend a lot of money to get this magic scroll. Even a high-ranked wizard might not be able to find us!” Another voice

sounded exasperated.

“Fine, stop quarrelling!” An old and hoarse voice sounded, immediately suppressing the dispute, “I believe Liberty—”

“Didn’t I tell you not to call me by my name? Not even my nickname!” The voice from before sounded again immediately.

“Fine, sorry.” The elderly voice halted, and then continued, “There are now tens of ships. We have people keeping watch over the Scarlet Tiger, and there’s the power of magic involved. He definitely won’t discover us, so we can discuss at ease...”

“The captain’s been getting more ruthless lately. Stalker merely said a word and was killed by him just like that. Even his underlings weren’t spared...” A voice of indignance could be heard.

“Did he discover something?” This was the worried person.

“The reason us brothers are banding together is for our own benefits, but now the captain wants to go to war on those two huge pirate groups. Tell me, what are our chances of winning?”

The elderly voice replied, “Actually, if the captain’s still like before and lets us loot and plunder as we like, while he’s in charge of disposing of the stolen goods and distributing profits, I have no issues with that. The issue is that things are different now. He wants us to risk our lives! Even if we get rid of the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates, they still have the Marquis and Baltic

archipelago as their backing and can quickly regain their strength. What about us? On top of that, they have a tremendous slaving fleet...”

At the end of that, the elderly voice suddenly grew louder.

“Then what do we do?” The reason they had gathered was not because they truly had plans to start a rebellion, but were merely agreeing on an alliance in order to protect their own interests.

“We’re pirates. How valuable could trust be? If put in a spot, we can just rebel against him and side with the other pirate groups. Whether it’s Marquis Louis or the Barbarians, anything can be considered...” The aged voice held hints of resentment.

Eyes full of wit shone in the dark room like a pack of wolves.

.....

“Reporting! Traces of the Scarlet Pirates have been found!” A pirate respectfully reported.

“Follow them, follow them! Keep a tight hold of them!” William’s eyes brightened.

The huge ships pulled at the sails, and they formed a huge arc in the strong wind. The entire fleet began to sail at a terrifying speed.

‘This is all thanks to master Boruj!’ Experiencing the strong winds in his face, William could not help but take a look at the high-ranked wizard next to him in admiration. The Breeze spell he’d cast had raised the fleet’s speed more than twofold.

Wizards could adapt to all sorts of complex environments. With the numerous types of spells they could cast, they were useful in all sorts of abrupt situations. In his opinion, the Scarlet Tigers would not be able to escape.

“An island has been discovered up ahead, and there are ships anchored there!” At this moment, the sailor at the observation deck exclaimed.

“What?” William immediately darted to the railings, using the telescope to observe. A huge barren island appeared in his line of sight. There was a series of pirate ships anchored at the side, the flag of the Scarlet Tigers extremely obvious on them.

“They’ve abandoned their ships and landed? Have they gone mad?” While still in disbelief, William gritted his teeth, “Go! Sink them!”

Whatever it was, he needed to sink the opponent’s ships. This way, they would be completely trapped. The offensive went smoothly. Not many had been left on watch, and Crowe and Citamo hadn’t even needed to act. Their first and second mates had taken along some people and seized the thirty pirate ships.

All the pirate ships that Leylin had spent a year seizing with his

own pirate crew now fell into William's hands. The process was so smooth-sailing that it was difficult to believe. The merfolk's ship, and even the Scarlet Tiger with its blood red flag were at his disposal.

“His ships were all very clean and had no traps. Based on the information from the slaves, this is a temporary stopping point for them, and they've built a few simple defenses...”

Crowe fiddled with the black curved knife in his hands, “So? Should we sail them away?” Such a huge fleet was worth at least tens of thousands of hold, an impressive amount of wealth. Even large pirate groups would go green in envy at it.

William muttered to himself, and then gritted his teeth. “No. Sink them all! Even if they've done anything to the ships, it shouldn't affect us.”

After all, there were a few terrifying toxins and curses that could be hidden from the senses of magic, and even divine force. He had come out to obtain a beautiful victory to secure his position as the successor. Nothing could go wrong.

“Master Boruj, what do you think?” William did not forget to ask for Boruj's opinion at this point.

“Alright!” The wizard nodded, causing Crowe and Citamo to curse inside. As expected, wizards were all spendthrifts!

Chapter 847 - Attack And Defence

Chaotic sounds rang out, and the bulk of the ships sank down into the sea one by one. William, however, had a blank expression on his face while he watched the Scarlet Tiger sinking. The largest ship of them all was being swallowed by the merciless waves.

“Is this... victory?” This presented him with an even greater enigma, which was whether to proceed with ground warfare or not.

“What should we do now?” William turned to look at Boruj rather awkwardly.

“I can feel a huge amount of life energy on the island. If I’m not wrong, he should still be there. But I can’t probe further into the details, and there are also disturbances deterring my predictions. After all, they have a wizard with them too...” The radiance of spells shone over Boruk as he shook his head with a bitter smile.

“Why would we attack? We can just patiently surround the island here, it’ll be impossible for anyone there who isn’t of a high rank to survive the loss of the ships...” Crowe’s expression was specific to the craftiness of a pirate.

“That’s a pretty good idea, but there’s another thing we have to consider. They might be trying to stall us here, I’m worried about the other fleet...” As loyal as the bribed pirates could be, they were nothing compared to the dogs they raised. William was aware of that.

Moreover, loyalty and trust weren't words in the pirates' dictionaries anyway. They were merely instinctive loonies that sought refuge from the strong!

The sudden blinking of a communication spell cause Boruj's face to drop.

"I've just received news that Pirates' Cove is immensely determined this time, and they even sent out the Pirates' Tide. The slaves' fleet has suffered great losses, and a few high-ranking captains were even murdered. We suspect that the God of Murder's organisation is behind it..."

"The God of Murder? Damn it!" Nobody who heard the name off this crazy deity would be too happy. William was about to implode. At the same time, he felt some sort of change in the eyes of the two bulky captains beside him.

The main reason why the Louis' family could terrorise these pirates was because of their enormous military fleets. If they lost too much power now, even without the Scarlet Tiger keeping them in check it was possible that these pirates would mutiny. Common countermeasures were useless against the pirates if they were set on betrayal.

"My Lord! The pirates that we've sent out have come back!" A subordinate announced as he led in a rogue dressed in black skintight clothes.

“My Lord, this is the information from ‘Night Owl!’” The rogue presented a letter to them. William slightly jerked his head to the side, signaling for his grey-haired butler to receive the letter and put it through a thorough check.

“No anomalies,” the butler reported after scrutinising it. He then passed the letter to William, who took his time to absorb the information.

His expression grew progressively better, “I’ve decided! We’re gonna land immediately and ambush the Scarlet Tigers!”

‘Has he had a spy among the Scarlet Tigers for a while?’ Crowe watched everything quietly, but something flashed across his eye.

William looked at Crowe. “They have around 500 pirates, if we were to face them head on, do you have the confidence to defeat them all, Captain Crowe?”

“Without any confirmed numbers of professionals over there, they are just merely just 500 midgets to me! My subordinates can finish all of them by themselves!” A sinister smile flashed past Crowe’s face.

The look of bloodlust induced some fear inside of William, ‘It’s been rumoured that most bloodline holders are nuts, and are easily aggravated or have extreme bloodlust; seems like it’s true!’

“It’s decided then! Captain Crowe will bring some men alongside

me to the land and Citamo will guard this place!” William commanded. Most of Citamo’s main power was still within the tigersharks, so only a small number of people could help on land.

‘I need some deeds to prove myself. As long as Master Boruj is here, everything should be alright!’ William glanced at the expressionless wizard at the side and cheered himself on.

Very quickly, an elite team led mostly by the Black Skeletons with some of William’s guards and the Tigershark Pirates reached the island.

The team had a manpower of around four to five hundred, but in terms of skills they were far better than whoever Leylin had under him.

“They’ve built a simple campsite here and stored a minimal amount of water and food, enough for more than two months. Also, they’ve also set up many traps, a majority of which are venomous snakes, in the canyon.”

William’s informant seemed to have given him more than enough intelligence, and he even provided a rough map.

“We’ll be fine as long as we have this!” Crowe’s bloodlust-filled smile widened, and it was indeed intimidating.

With the informant’s report and their own pirate scouts, they successfully passed the trap-filled canyon and arrived at the pirate

campsite. The wooden fence was sharp, and in front of it were some ugly pagodas. Many were looking at these, secretly letting out fearful gasps every now and then.

.....

Isabel walked into the center of the campsite, “The enemies have made it past the venomous snake canyon, I was right about them having a mole in us. And the spy is at least a middle-ranked one, god damn it!”

“This is nothing out of the ordinary. You can leave for now.” Leylin waved his arm, and a dispirited pirate leader walked out.

“You used Dominate Person?” Isabel asked. Although the pirate leader didn’t look like he was in his best condition, it didn’t look like he was controlled either.

“Nope, just a simple psychological hint. And with those kinds of spells, even if spell slots weren’t taken into account I don’t have enough power and spirit to control so many intelligent creatures right now.” Leylin shook his head. “Survival is the first instinct of all creatures, and to be able to leave a spiritual imprint on this base nature is very difficult. On the other hand, it’s easy to give them a lasting hint, furthermore...”

“My Lord!” Ronald came in on time, and knelt down respectfully, “All the preparations are done!”

“Great! Let us go welcome them, or else they wouldn’t launch the attack at all.” Leylin stood on top of the fort with Isabel and Ronald by his side, directly looking into the eye of a young aristocrat in the opposite force.

“Is that Leylin Faulen? The son of the the Baron?” William was looking at them too.

“Yes, I’ve checked! It isn’t any illusionary spell or camouflage. The Scarlet Witch is there as well.” Boruj confirmed.

“The rest is up to you, Captain Crowe!” William looked at Crowe beside him, the man’s eyes already filled with killing intent. Blood vessels were popping up on the man’s eyes.

“No problem, but that Scarlet Witch is mine!” Crowe growled, “Black Skeletons, follow me!”

“Animate Dead!” “Strengthen Undead!” “Skeleton Call!”

An array of spells launched from Crowe’s body, forming a bone armour around his body first of all. It caged him securely. The ground then bulged, small bones jutting out as skeletons crawled their way out. They seemed to come from hell, holding rusty axes and broken swords as they rushed towards the campsite.

“Undead creatures!” “It’s the undead!” The pirates in the campsite were in chaos. If it weren’t for Leylin’s early preparations, it might have sparked a rebellion.

“It has been rumoured that the Black Skeletons’ captain is a bloodline holder, and is able to call upon the dead, looks like the rumours are real!” Even though low-ranked skeletons like this would not cause much trouble, it was a huge blow to his men’s confidence. Leylin furrowed his brows, sending out a few spells.

“Berserk!” “Blizzard!” “Resist Energy!”

Under the influence of Berserk, many low-ranked pirates started yelling as if their bodies were filled with immense strength. Bows were continuously in action, the arrows they shot out turning the skeletons to dust.

“These spells, we can already confirm it’s him.” William nodded his head as he watched, feeling a little upset. Even though his opponent had a good affinity for spells, to waste his slots from the start made him no different from those stupid and rash bloodline holders.

‘Alright. We can end the war if we capture him, but on top of that we can even blackmail Baron Jonas for the refined sugar and fish floss techniques.’ William was extremely jealous of these two money-makers and started growling, “I will bestow 1000 coins upon anyone who’s able to capture that wizard. You can also do whatever you wish to the captured women!”

All the pirates got excited at the great rewards, and started charging madly towards the fences.

“Our low-ranked pirates are of such inferior quality, they couldn’t improve much even with the enhancement of the spells. And my spells are limited in time and scope.” Leylin laughed bitterly to Isabel as he looked at the pirates who were starting to give way. Both of them retreated from the frontline and came to the hall.

“Prepare to leave!” Leylin signalled with his hand, and Ronald started moving away the obstacles to reveal a passageway in the corner of the hall. This was a passageway that Leylin had made when he built the campsite back then, its existence was known to only about 3 people. Ronald had only found out about it today.

Chapter 848 - Explosion

“Brothers, we can’t risk our lives for that wizard who fled and left us all behind!” An unexpected figure stood out in the front line.

Cyclops growled, “If we surrender, they’ll overlook all the sins we committed against them. He’s a viscount, mateys! What are you sprogs still waiting for?” This pirate, one of Leylin’s first subordinates, betrayed him in the blink of an eye. Cyclops had even established contact with William some time before.

As they realised that Leylin was indeed absent, the morale of the other pirates was greatly affected. They were shaken by the suggestions of their leader, and many decided to throw down their weapons and surrender.

The door of the campsite was thrown open, and Cyclops stood aside respectfully to let Crowe and his gang in. Even if they still had any last remnants of resistance, it was of no use in this current situation.

“You’ve done well, I will put in a good word for you to my father!” William patted Cyclops’ shoulder contentedly, which made the pirate look very touched.

“Where are Leylin and the rest?”

“Don’t worry, we’ve already sent our men to block off their paths, they won’t be able to escape!” Cyclops proceeded to

welcome William into the meeting chamber, while the summoned skeletons were disposing of a handful of pirates that were still putting up a fight.

“What’s going on? What happened to all of you? I thought we had come to an agreement!” Cyclops raised his attention as he saw a few of the pirate leaders who had conspired with him grouping together.

“Be careful! I felt uneasy the moment I stepped in here.” Boruj whispered to William as he cast some spells.

“Mage Armour II!” “Detect Danger!” “Eagle Eye!”

Soon after, his expression grew dark. “Shit! Run!” A teleportation gate appeared and Boruj pulled William with him as he threw himself into its depths.

“Come and see the fireworks.” Outside the campsite, Leylin and Isabel stood next to each other and watched the camp near them.

Boom!

Dazzling sparks of flame emerged from all around the campsite, and immediately encircled the pirates within.

Cyclops was at a loss. Before he could even figure out the situation, an immense force ripped his body apart.

Terrifying explosions sounded, and a mushroom cloud soared into the sky. The resulting shockwaves were so strong that even the trees near Leylin were uprooted. Earthquakes ensued, the ground seeming to let out a deafening lament as it split wide open.

“With the money from the fish floss as well as some money borrowed from the church of wealth, I bought goblin explosives. What a scene!” Leylin commented as he observed the scene unfolding itself from afar.

Ronald stood behind Leylin, shock was written all over his face. Only his psychotic leader could think of a plan as crazy as filling the campsite with dynamite to send both his enemies and his own men to hell, hand in hand.

“But, even though we used a big amount of dynamite, this impact is just too big. This is as powerful as a rank 9 area of effect spell. Actually, it might even be equivalent to a legendary spell!” Ronald muttered, without noticing he had just voiced his opinion out loud.

Leylin smirked. In reality, the credits weren't solely to the dynamite. He had added his own techniques and the A.I. Chip's processing, enhancing the explosives and increasing their damage.

Furthermore, Leylin made meticulous preparations, using many concealing spells to avoid the enemies' suspicion.

Well, at the very least, the Black Skeletons became history. This plan ended up creating a huge hole in his wallet and exhausting him to the bones, but the results were satisfying. As for Boruj, Leylin did not plan on keeping the wizard around.

A bad thing about high-ranked wizards was that it got increasingly difficult to eliminate them once they grew familiar with teleportation.

But the rest of the people on the campsite were not so lucky.

“Be prepared, our men will soon catch up to us.” There were still around a hundred elite pirates under Leylin’s control.

These were Leylin’s true subordinates, the loyal ones that he chose through many bloody battles. Even their families had been sent to the Faulen Island to be supervised.

“Kill everyone in the campsite. No exceptions,” Leylin commanded icily at the crucial moment. He could not spare any time to care about collateral damage.

He knew that, even if it was stunning, this enhanced explosion’s damage was still limited.

After all, at least the rank 15 Professional Crowe would be able to run a few hundred meters away before the explosion, leaving the area with highest damage. However, he would still be severely injured. In addition, Professionals at or above rank 10 would still

have a high survival rate. The deciding factor would be their injuries.

Others, however, would have no chance to live. Leylin had added some special elements to increase the damage, contaminating the campsite with large amounts of neurotoxins. With the explosion, the toxic gas would finish off any remaining people.

This was Leylin's niche, so he was obviously confident about it. As for his current subordinates, they had already received their doses of antidote, so there was no need to worry. These trained pirates charged into the hellish campsite and started attacking every person and creature in sight.

Every Black Skeleton survivor was severely injured, and was no match for these guys. Thus, there was no way of resisting their fate. On the other hand, Leylin and Isabel were able to locate Crowe through their spiritual force and stop him from going any further.

"Captain Crowe, please be on your way soon. I'm extremely busy today." Leylin spoke politely while he scanned the severely injured Crowe. He meant what he said. After all, once Crowe was dead, Leylin would have access to a huge number of ships.

The deaths of those stupid pirates meant nothing. As long as his 100 elites remained, he could have as many men as he needed. Of course, if the Black Skeletons' magic battleship was included, then that would be a perfect ending.

However, Crowe suddenly did something out of the blue.

“My young lord Leylin! Please let me off! I promise you my loyalty and all of the Black Skeletons’ fortunes!” He got onto his knees with a thump and buried his head in the mud. This arrogant pirate had actually surrendered.

‘Really?’ Leylin looked at him with an undecipherable expression. Crowe’s condition was obviously not at its peak, but Leylin could feel that he still had the power of qi.

“This comes from the bottom of my heart! Furthermore, the ships are still being watched by the sharkman Citamo, I can kill all of them for you, my precious Lord!”

“It’s unbelievable that our cruel and merciless Black Skeleton Pirate captain still had this side to him!” Leylin smiled, “But I won’t be fazed by this little bloodline trick. You can stop your performance right there.”

‘He noticed!’ Crowe raised his head, while spell power glowing on his body.

But Leylin was faster. A crimson shadow flashed, and the Devilblood Dagger was pinned onto Crowe’s head in no time.

Crowe’s expression was weird as his body slowly fell. All the spell rays on his body broke into pieces. This brutal bloodline pirate, and high-ranked knight, ended up dead.

Loud gurgling noises could be heard. The Devilblood Dagger was glistening with blood, numerous blood vessels emerging and coiling around Crowe. Everything was sucked from him, causing the demonic skull to emit an excited growl.

After all, it had never encountered a creature of this strength. An immense power spread from the dagger, and Leylin felt a little uneasy.

[Beep! Host body enhanced by Devilblood Dagger!
Strength+0.7, Agility+1.5, Vitality+0.3]

The A.I. Chip's alerts made Leylin realise his stats had updated once more.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 16 Race: Rank 9 Human Wizard.
Strength: 5.2. Agility: 6.5. Vitality: 6.3. Spirit: 9 Condition:
Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite. Spell Slots: Rank 4(1), Rank
3(3), Rank 2(5), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]

“You really live up to the fame of a high-ranked Professional. Look at the extent of this enhancement.” Leylin smiled with satisfaction as he felt his limbs become more nimble and light.

Crowe's high rank was no joke. The enhancement he brought upon Leylin was great. He wasn't interested in spirit enhancement from the man, given that everything he had would only raise it by 0.2, but there were better candidates to harvest spiritual force from anyway.

The A.I Chip flashed another prompt.

[Beep! Target holds the 'Wolf Skeleton' bloodline, 12.19% compatible with host's body. Begin absorption?]

"No, extract the bloodline instead!" Following Leylin's command, a dark drop of blood appeared from Crowe's forehead, seating itself inside a black bottle that Leylin was holding.

Leylin had no interest in this sort of bloodline power, but it would be useful to give to his subordinates so he could create a few bloodline holders.

Chapter 849 - Two-Legged Wyverns

“Is that the item you made a deal with the devil for?” Once everything was over, Isabel walked in slowly, eyes focused on the bloody knife in Leylin’s hand.

She’d known something was off about her cousin from the start, and that he was evidently hiding something. In addition, Leylin hadn’t tried to hide anything from her just now. Hence, Isabel knew that Leylin’s quick rise in strength definitely had to do with a devil. However, even if she found out, she had no plans to divulge it.

Part of it was because of their relationship from childhood. On the other hand, they were all in the same boat. Although demons and devils shared a completely antagonistic relationship and were two opposing forces, there weren’t many differences in terms of their followers.

Isabel was rather worried, because making deals with devils usually meant giving up one’s soul. On top of that, devils liked to use all sorts of plots in order to nibble away at the contractor’s soul, causing them to completely become depraved.

It could be said that for those who were experienced, devils were far worse than demons. Of course, due to devils keeping to their side of the deal even more strictly, there were even more believers praying to devils than demons in the World of Gods.

After seeing Isabel’s gaze, Leylin could tell what she was

thinking.

“Don’t worry. I didn’t deal with my soul!” Leylin launched a fireball from his hands, burning the withered corpses on the ground to ashes. Though there was nothing much to hide from his cousin, it was still better to keep some things secret from his underlings.

“Be careful. The devils’ cunning is famous even in the vast multiverse.” Isabel went silent after the warning, her eyes now filled with some sort of determination. Once they were back to the camp, Ronald and Robin Hood, who had not been seen for a long time, welcomed them.

“My lord, the whole camp has been purged!” Robin Hood reported respectfully. It had originally seemed like he’d been demoted, and few paid attention to him. The truth was that he’d been hidden in the shadows, helping Leylin manage the true elites in his forces.

“Good! Let’s go to the fleet. Things should be lively there...” Leylin’s face lit up with a smile.

.....

A while earlier. At the seaside, on the Black Skeletons’ ship.

A teleportation gate burst into existence, and Boruj and William stumbled out pathetically.

Without high-ranked Mage Armour, William had been affected despite having escaped quickly. A large portion of his handsome hair had already been burnt off, and it was now like a bird's nest. There were burns all over his body.

“What’s going on? What’s that?” Terrifying explosions could be seen even on the shore. William grabbed onto the railings looking dazed, crying out maniacally. The feeling of having a brush with death left fear in his heart.

“It should be the explosions, but the power has increased by quite a bit! My men are going to be annihilated!” Boruj was completely fine, but his brows furrowed while looking doubtful, “Why didn’t I find anything? Is this some sort of new concealment technique, or the effects of a large-scaled spell formation?”

“Something’s off.” All of a sudden, Boruj’s expression changed, and a ring on his hand exploded, producing a powerful magic barrier.

Mage’s Sword! A magic sword appeared, colliding with a huge metallic flying hatchet. A huge crash could be heard in the air, the resulting undulations causing several huge pits to appear on the deck.

“An enemy! Who is it? Where’s Citamo? Show yourself!” William had noticed something was off too. The large explosion from before had attracted their attention, but he had not found anything strange in his surroundings.

It was far too quiet on the deck, and all the pirates who had stayed behind to guard it had disappeared.

“Are you looking for this?” A huge shark head was tossed to the ground. This was the head of a sharkman, and one that William was very familiar with.

Citamo looked to have suffered before death. The area under his neck still had blood dripping unceasingly, and it looked like his neck had been squeezed off him while he was alive.

A huge barbarian appeared in William’s line of sight, his footsteps thudding on the ship’s deck. He raised a huge saber, the bloody injuries on his body already healing quickly in demonstration of his astounding life force.

‘It’s Ogde, the captain of the Barbarians! He sneak attacked the guards who stayed behind!’ William immediately guessed at something.

“It turns out that Hygar Island was just a facade. You’d already left... Everything was a trap!” It would take two days to rush here from the battlefield, but if there was a batch of elites that had set off earlier, this would be easy to conceal from others.

William’s lips quirked bitterly. Most of his family’s power was destroyed, and he might even be in huge danger. This would also be a huge blow to his status.

‘Without our men coordinating with them, this plan would never have worked. Who was it?’ William roared inside.

“Be careful! I might not be able to protect you in a bit!” Boruj’s voice rang, causing William to look even more bitter.

“Hehe... Young master of the Baltic archipelago, we finally meet!” An alluring fox lady walked out from behind Ogde, with tens of barbarian warriors above rank 5 with her.

“What about those Tigersharks? Why did they come here so easily?” William was in denial that the whole Tigershark Pirates had been wiped out. After all, it was a large-scaled group comparable with the Black Skeletons, and even had a huge group of Tigersharks. In the seas, they would definitely be the king.

“You mean those little fish? I’m afraid they’ve sunk to the bottom of the sea. Someone provided Tears of Tigersharks to us, and the effects are pretty good!” Madam Tillen produced an exquisite crystal bottle and shook it, looking innocent and flirtatious like a little girl who had gotten a beloved toy.

William stared at her blankly, beginning to lose focus in his eyes.

“Be careful! This is a bewitching spell by a bloodline holder!”

Calm! A huge sound boomed by William’s ear, allowing him to regain his senses, no longer daring to take another look at the fox

lady.

“Boruj, high-ranked wizard Boruj. I will chop off your head and use it as a wine cup!” The leader of the Barbarians huffed roughly, eyes turning red as if he had seen a foe.

As Marquis Louis’ leading wizard, Boruj had worked hard when expanding in the outer seas. The number of Barbarian Pirates who had died at his hand were innumerable, and the relationship between them was completely irreconcilable.

Ogde snarled, his saber emitting sparks that flew for a few meters. Looking nonchalant, he slashed at Boruj.

As the light burst out, even the deck that had been remodelled and covered with a layer of magic seemed to be plowed through by something ruthlessly, revealing huge ‘bruises’.

Boruj looked solemn and serious after witnessing the terrifying offence by the Barbarian, the spell slot in his memories breaking out.

Arcane Hand! A huge magical palm reached out, clashing with the blade to form a terrifying explosion.

Once the undulations had passed, the sharp saber light cut the huge palm into several fragments, its own radiance dimming. However, it still proceeded towards Boruj.

Boruj frowned and pointed towards the ground. “Wall of Iron!” A thick, metallic wall appeared, blocking the blade. Still, there were now terrifying streaks of injuries on him.

“This can’t go on!” Boruj watched the elite barbarian warriors surrounding him, especially with Tillen who could use magic and a few barbarian priests, already having thoughts of retreating.

With a shake of his sleeve, an intricate spell scroll fell to his hand. Gazing at it, a rare expression of heartache appeared, but he still tore at it.

Bang! A dark green mist spread above the deck, and the barbarian warriors who were affected immediately collapsed, bodies still twisting unconsciously.

“Be careful, this is a Death Cloud spell!” Madam Tillen’s voice sounded. Afterwards, a few roars could be heard from within the mist, bringing a horror with them.

Roar! A few huge dark green monsters pounced from the mist. They looked like giant lizards that had meaty wings on their backs. Their bodies were covered by a layer of scales and they spat out bundles of corrosive fluids.

High-grade Monster Summon! Just as these few two-legged wyverns began to trouble Ogde, another even more enormous two-legged wyvern spread its wings and flew away with two people in tow.

“Ah...” Seeing the two-legged wyvern agilely avoiding the long-distance attacks by the archers, Ogde thundered, breaking the neck of a wyvern in front of him.

“Master, why aren’t we teleporting away?” While on the expansive back of the two-legged wyvern, William grabbed onto a scale and made an enquiry.

“I only memorised one teleportation spell. After that, I’ll need to use scrolls...”

Boruj had a wry smile, “I’m not sure if the enemy will still chase us, so we need to conserve our strength!”

“Damn it! Damn it!” Thinking back to the failure this time, William’s facial muscles began to contort.

“That Leylin and the Barbarians! One day... one day... All the humiliation I have suffered will be returned to you!”

“I’m afraid you won’t get that opportunity!”

Chapter 850 - Destruction

Purplish black light glinted off a blade that brought demonic strength with it as it descended from the sky in an instant.

The source was a nimble body that emitted the terrifying aura of a high-ranked Professional, the long sword in its hands beamed with the bright radiance of qi.

The sharp longsword broke through the two-legged wyvern's scales, carving down in a perfect curve.

Boom!

First there was a sea of blood, then the creature's gigantic head came crashing down from the horizon, like a meteor.

"There's an enemy!" A teleportation scroll appeared in Boruj's hand, ready to be used.

[Dimensional Anchor]!

At this moment, a flying black figure dove down like a falcon. The rays of light in its hands interrupted Boruj's teleportation spell with perfect timing.

"A rank 4 spell! He's already a rank 9 wizard!"

The shadow belonged to the high-ranked fighter from before, and a youthful, handsome face was revealed. It was Leylin.

Isabel's arm was covered in demonic scales. Making use of Leylin's power, she struck out with another attack in midair.

Purplish black qi slashed through Boruj's high-grade Mage Armour, resulting in a horrifying wound.

Splash! Splash! Boruj let out a blood-curdling screech as he fell into the icy-cold seawater together with William.

Following them into the sea, Leylin and Isabel looked like two nimble fish, easily swimming their way towards their target.

The wizard Boruj, who had always lived the pampered life of a prince, began struggling as large amounts of cold seawater entered his nose and mouth, and intense pain afflicted his chest.

Especially after he caught sight of a shadow of a soul out of the corner of his eye, their fight intensified.

Crimson rays surged out from the seabed. With frightening sharpness, the Devilblood Dagger broke through the multiple temporarily activated layers of magic defense, piercing into Boruj's shoulder.

Feeling the immense life and spiritual forces gushing out as if a dam had just been opened, Boruj could only smile wryly as he observed the calm expression on the young wizard's face.

A 16 year old rank 9 wizard with such meticulous strategies and absolute calm in battle. Marquis Louis had gotten himself a terrifying enemy.

While he desperately wanted to escape and warn his master, all his spiritual force was sealed the moment he was stabbed by the Devilblood Dagger. His limbs could only flail instinctively.

Large amounts of energy coursed through the dagger and entered Leylin's body. Its smooth and unhindered flow made him want to shout at the top of his lungs.

However, he forcefully suppressed the desire. He did not relax his grip on the dagger until Boruj turned into a withered corpse.

As a high-ranked wizard, Boruj's highest attribute was his spirit. Based on Leylin's calculations, his spirit stat should be above 15, and Leylin was conveniently getting all of it without much effort.

Pure spiritual energy was transformed by the Devilblood Dagger and greedily absorbed by Leylin. With his experience of the law of devouring in his main body, Leylin had proficiently grasped this conversion process.

Soon enough, a prompt came from the A.I. Chip.

[Beep! Host has gone through enhancement by Devilblood Dagger. Spirit +1.]

In Leylin's stats, it could be seen that his spiritual force attribute had finally reached 10. As soon as that threshold was broken through, Leylin experienced a strange transformation.

His soul ascended without limits, and it was as if he could see an even more terrifying layer of the Weave. However, his spiritual force had not reached the requirements yet, and thus he could only shrink back helplessly.

'Level 5 of the Weave? It's a pity, but I can't go in yet!' Leylin sighed.

[Beep! Host's spiritual force has broken through to 10 points. Analysis of the Weave is now faster.]

The A.I. Chip's prompt sounded, as it continuously refreshed.

[Beep! Host's spiritual force has broken through. Wizard ranking has increased. Now a rank 10 wizard.] [Beep! Host has advanced to rank 10 wizard. Rank 4 spell slots increased by 1,

rank 3 spell slots increased by 1, rank 2 spell slots increased by 1.] [Beep! Change in host's stats. Recalculating.]

Soon enough, Leylin's stats were being recalculated.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 16. Race: Human, Rank 10 Wizard. Strength: 5.2. Agility: 6.5. Vitality: 6.3. Spiritual force: 10. Status: Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite. Spell Slots: Rank 4(2), Rank 3(4), Rank 2(6), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)] [Progress of analysis of the Weave: Level 0 Weave at 100%! Level 1 Weave at 100%! Level 2 Weave at 36.29%! Level 3 Weave at 15.50%! Level 4 Weave at 1.96%!]

‘As expected, a wizard's rise in rank is useful for the analysis of the Weave.’ Leylin studied his new stats and the progress of the analysis of the Weave, as a look of satisfaction appeared on his face.

[Beep! Detected that host's spiritual force stats reached threshold. Triggered reaction. Devilblood Dagger's enhancement to increase of spiritual force is now weakened!]

‘So the day has finally arrived.’ Leylin looked at the A.I. Chip's last prompt and could not help but sigh.

10 points of spiritual force was really the threshold. From hereon, the dagger would be less effective.

Killing a high-ranked wizard had allowed him to raise his spiritual force by 1 point. Next time, however, it might not even be enough to raise it by 0.1.

‘This is just a passing phase, so I cannot rely on the dagger too much. However, I can still use it to raise all other stats to 10. I have a feeling that if I’m able to get everything to the threshold, something incredible might happen.’

Leylin had always believed in his premonitions.

On the enemy’s corpse, there were a few items that were sparkling with a magic lustre. A high-ranked wizard’s equipment was invaluable, and also very suitable for Leylin. His eyes shone.

After Boruj was almost completely skinned, Leylin destroyed the corpse and floated up quickly.

‘Even with the power of magic, I’m no divine being. I still need oxygen.’ Leylin flung off the beads of water on his hair and looked towards Isabel, who had also resurfaced.

“How is it? Everything’s taken care of?”

“It’s just noble trash. How hard can it be?” Isabel had a dazzling smile on her face. This expression of hers was rare after she’d

demonised. After exacting revenge, at least in part, something that had been binding her down seemed to have disappeared.

“Good. William, Boruj, Crowe, and Citamo are all done for. I’m actually interested in Marquis Louis’ expression after hearing this.”

“That old fool won’t have long to live!” Isabel declared his death.

“Exactly. What’s pressing us right now is the meet up with the Barbarian Pirates and the destruction of the slaving fleet to completely destroy Louis’ influence on the sea.”

Leylin grabbed Isabel’s hand and, as rays of a flight spell flickered, the two of them soared into the sky.

Once they were back on the Black Skeleton Ship, Ronald and Robin Hood hurried over just in time, along with Leylin’s subordinates. They separated out into an entirely different group from the Barbarians.

“Hehe, we meet again, young master Leylin!” Mistress Tillen whipped her fiery-red tail, smiling as she greeted him. The previously stiff atmosphere immediately turned warm.

“I really need to thank you for the Tigershark’s Tears! I never thought this kind of poison has such great effect on the schools of Tigersharks.” Tillen’s beautiful eyes sized him up, as if wanting to pry into his heart.

“This is a potion my master made. He has great knowledge in poisonous concoctions and alchemy.” Leylin spouted lies with a straight face, intentionally or otherwise raising the status of his master.

In reality, Ernest only dipped slightly into alchemy. It would be a dream to be able to brew such high-grade poisons. Leylin, however, didn't mind labelling and giving him a more terrifying fame.

As expected, after hearing Leylin's mentor was a terrifying master of poisons, the other elite barbarian fighters had a sombre look in their eyes.

They had witnessed the scene before. Just using a Tigershark as bait made the entire group go berserk, and they even began to kill each other. Their blood also turned into a frightening poison that infected the others.

If a poison like this, that targeted species, was used against barbarians... Just the thought of it caused a chill to run down Tillen's spine.

“Based on our agreement, the Black Skeletons belong to me and the Tigersharks go to you. Any objections?” Leylin focused on the captain of the Barbarians, Odge.

Currently, Odge had less than 50 men, and there were many casualties. Leylin's 100 elite members were completely fine.

However, Odge's higher-grade military power was intact. Therefore, both sides were evenly matched.

"You are... great!" Odge glanced at Leylin, voice sounding like metal rubbing against metal.

"Let's go!" Odge's gigantic figure left first, followed by the other Barbarian fighters.

"Handsome little young master, don't forget we still have another agreement!" Mistress Tillen was the last to leave, prompting Leylin with meaning.

"Don't worry, I would never forget." Leylin watched them as they left the Black Skeleton Ship. From then on, this huge, magic-modified warship belonged to him. That was not all. The other large warships that Crowe had built with his blood and sweat were now Leylin's as well.

Chapter 851 - Loot

The flag representing the black skeletons was slowly lowered from the battleship's mast, replaced with the bright red flag of the Scarlet Tigers.

“The old Scarlet Tiger is already at the bottom of the sea, but the crew shall now give it a new life. The Black Skeleton shall henceforth be called the Scarlet Tiger!” Leylin announced this decision as he stood on the deck, which immediately attracted cheers from his men.

Compared to the previous Scarlet Tiger which had been built on top of the Black Tiger, this ship was deserving of being Crowe's flagship. Not only was it fully covered in a layer of magical armour, giving it a shocking defence, just the size of the vessel and the water it displaced far exceeded his former ship's.

However, Leylin had benefitted at his opponent's expense. All of this was now his. “Robin Hood, allocate some of the men to start up the battleships behind as well!”

“Aye, boss!” Robin Hood rubbed his hands together excitedly. The fleet of ships under the Black Skeletons was extremely luxurious. There were more than ten large battleships, and none of them was inferior to the previous Scarlet Tiger. The Scarlet Tiger pirate crew could truly eat their fill this time.

“Drive the ships off first, then we'll replenish our manpower and depart for Hygar Island to take part in the naval battle!” After

destroying two large pirate crews in one go, the remaining slaving fleet armed with military equipment was the only force that Marquis Louis was left with. How could Leylin let them off?

However, he was now facing a severe lack of manpower. After barely being able to start up the vessels, there were few people left to participate in battle.

Such a situation made Leylin laugh bitterly.

‘I’m afraid that these large-scale warships have to be kept safe for a period of time. The number of men I’m bringing with me to the naval battle this time round might not take up more than five large boats...’ He clearly had such huge ships, yet didn’t have enough manpower. This was the predicament that Leylin was currently facing.

He even wanted to let his family’s bodyguards disguise themselves as pirates, but quickly gave up that idea. After all, his adversaries this time round were different from pirates. They were a military fleet under an influential nobleman, whose name would not be revealed for purposes of secrecy. The bodyguards of his own family perhaps might not dare to take action.

It was needless to mention the effects of bringing them here. Leylin didn’t want to lose them. Hence, he could only bring his own men to engage in war, but unfortunately, the majority of his subordinates had sacrificed their lives during the previous explosion.

But these were all trivial matters. When news of the Scarlet Tiger destroying the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates spread, there would be plenty of pirates pleading to join him. The two fleets started to part ways, while Leylin hid in the captain's room and looked through his gains.

Crowe's cabin was very spacious, and had all kinds of vibrant oil paintings and other artworks on the walls. They were evidently accumulated over his long life as a pirate.

“Crowe's private treasury is just a small matter. After all, most of his riches are on the magical battleship under my feet. What's truly valuable is the wizard's equipment!” Leylin unabashedly occupied the golden seat embedded with precious jewels that once belonged to Crowe. He sized up several items on the table with bright eyes.

The first thing that came into his line of sight was an old-fashioned leather pouch.

“A Bag of Holding!” Leylin's eyes brightened. He had been envious of this legendary piece of equipment that was standard for high level wizards. It was a pity that it was hard to purchase one even with the Faulens' current financial resources.

But now, Boruj had actually taken the initiative to deliver it to him. A personal Bag of Holding would definitely have curses and other mechanisms on it, but they could not hide from the A.I. Chip's scans. Leylin easily broke them.

The Bag of Holding was close to ten cubic metres in size, which pleasantly surprised Leylin. In a corner of the space was a messy heap of gold coins and gems that he estimated to be worth tens of thousands of gold kronas, but it was actually the pile with the lowest value.

“So many... So many high level spell-casting materials... and wizardry books...” Leylin’s smile became wider. These were all items that couldn’t be bought with money. When his eyes paused upon a few ancient-looking scrolls, his smile was the brightest it could ever be.

These scrolls were adorned with complex designs, and the scrolls themselves were made using leather from some sort of animal. There were even traces of its scales on the surface. As Leylin gently caressed the scrolls, he could sense a subtle layer of mental deterrence.

‘This is the power of a dragon! Dragon skin was used to make these few scrolls!’ Leylin’s eyes glistened as he slowly opened the scrolls.

[Beep! Spiritual energy data detected, initialising scan.]

The scrolls contained a multitude of magic circuits and strangely-shaped writing. This was a way of storing information that allowed a huge amount of characters and resources to be stored within the relatively small scroll. Although there were still other kinds of encryption on it, Leylin felt that they were not worth

mentioning.

The A.I. Chip immediately prompted.

[Decryption complete. Transmitting to memory...]

Following the A.I. Chip's voice, Leylin first saw a row of words: "Re: Structure of the magic circuit within the low-level wizard tower..."

'As expected, are these the materials that Boruj prepared for his own wizard tower?' Leylin scanned through the next few scrolls. Apart from techniques to construct a wizard tower, there was also information about defensive golems and methods of manufacturing their bodies.

'Who would've thought that Boruj was also a master of golems? But what a pity... Everything he had prepared now belongs to me.' Leylin was full of ambition. As a wizard, the benefits he could reap from the assistance of a wizard tower on his path of advancement would be unimaginable.

'Speaking of which, there still seem to be large quantities of raw materials on the Baltic archipelago that Marquis Louis had prepared for the wizard tower, especially mithril and pure gold. It's practically priceless!'

Leylin secretly made a decision. He quickly stowed the Bag of Holding away, and looked over a few other items. The radiance of the Identify spell kept flickering on Leylin's palm.

‘A magical staff that stores enchanted missiles, and an anti-detection cloak? Not bad...’ Leylin evaluated the items one by one, and his gaze finally fell on a black ring.

After the Identify spell flashed, the relevant information was revealed and digitalized by the A.I. Chip before being presented in front of Leylin's eyes.

[Name of item: Wizard Ring. Weight: 11 grams. Materials: Obsidian, wizard alloy, dragon blood. Effects: Addition of one spell slot allocated to all spell slots below rank 5 (exclusive to wizards). Description: This is a ring that possesses formidable magic powers, and will likely be coveted by other beings. A brilliant smelter could possibly strengthen the material.]

“This ring might just be Boruj's best piece of equipment!” Leylin sighed. “It's definitely a far cry from the legendary Lich Ring, which allows a single addition to all of the wizard's spell slots, but it's still a godly tool for a lower-ranked wizard!”

Leylin estimated a high price of five hundred thousand gold coins for just Boruj's equipment. It showed how affluent wizards were, especially the high-ranked ones. Any of their equipment chosen at random could be sold at a sky-high price!

‘This ring!’ Leylin gently stroked the surface of the black ring. He could feel faint traces of spiritual energy from it.

“Dragon blood was added to this ring when it was forged, but it seems to be mixed with something else as well...” Leylin muttered to himself. “If matched with other precious materials, it does indeed have room for improvement. However, my current wizard rank is inadequate...”

After a few rounds of scanning and verification, Leylin wore the Wizard Ring on his left hand. At that instant, his statistics changed.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 16. Race: Rank 10 human wizard. Strength: 5.2. Agility: 6.5. Vitality: 6.3. Spirit: 10. State: Healthy. Innate skills possessed: Robust, erudite and multi-talented. Spell slots owned: Rank 4 spell slots (3), rank 3 spell slots (5), rank 2 spell slots (7), rank 1 spell slots (???), rank 0 spell slots (???)]

To a wizard, every increase in spell slots meant a significant upgrade in terms of strength. Leylin could imagine the trouble he would face if the existence of this ring was discovered by other wizards.

“Perhaps I should add a form of concealment to it. It can’t emit such a strong halo of magic light at least, it’s practically asking to be a target...”

.....

The setting sun was painted blood red.

Numerous tattered and fragmented remains of a ship were drifting across the surface of the sea in the vicinity of Hygar Island.

Dozens of floating corpses belonging to the mariners of Baltic archipelago were strewn everywhere. Some of the dead bodies had been immersed in the seawater for so long that they had inflated, and appeared extremely terrifying.

A flag that represented Marquis Louis' influence was slowly bobbing up and down in the water, and a big part of it seemed to have been burnt off at the edges.

After taking a while to rest and reorganise themselves, Leylin and Odge had brought their men, taking their main battleships to fight the military fleet.

Dealing with the Pirates' Tide had already been a problem, but with the addition of Leylin and Odge the situation on the battlefield changed drastically. Under attack from both sides, the military fleet was instantly defeated. Even the commander-in-chief was hit by an artillery shell, and he died on the spot.

Numerous ships were attacked and they sank one by one. Countless mariners of the Baltic archipelago were either dead or injured.

The two pirate crews raised their flags bit by bit in the afterglow of the setting sun, and left the battlefield one after the other. Next, they would pillage the territories and harbours belonging to Marquis Louis separately. They could make up for their losses this round, and conveniently strike it rich.

“Our honeymoon period with the Barbarians has already passed...” Leylin exhaled deeply as he stood on the deck, watching them leave.

Chapter 852 - Storm And Capture

Following the complete fall of Marquis Louis' men at sea, remarkable changes immediately occurred to the situation offshore.

Leylin and the Barbarians originally had no choice but to ally in their fight against Marquis Louis' oppression. However, with the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates destroyed, that pressure had completely vanished with the sinking of the military fleet he'd painstakingly built. Now, a rivalry formed between the two crews.

As there was still a gigantic cash cow right in front of their eyes, the conflict between both sides certainly hadn't escalated to a great extent. Still, it was already impossible to prevent future fights.

Leylin had long prepared for this.

"Set sail! Let's go to the Baltic Harbour, straight into the base camp of that old fox!" Leylin's order was accompanied by cheers from his pirates. They started up the Scarlet Tiger, which was like a gigantic creature of the sea as they headed towards the Baltic Archipelago.

.....

Thump! Shatter! The sharp and clear sounds of glass and chinaware falling onto the ground could be heard, occasionally interspersed with bellows of rage.

The maids and subordinates in the marquis' residence did not even dare to breathe heavily, fearful of becoming the target of his fury. Ever since news of William's death had made its way here, Louis had sunken into a state of complete hysterical. Several servants had been dragged out and beaten to death, including a few personal female servants that Louis once favoured greatly.

Under such circumstances, it was understandable that the servants were being silent out of fear. For some reason, Tim was secretly very elated upon seeing the situation. He was even filled with the rejuvenating pleasure of someone having taken his revenge.

‘Has that damn William been completely fed to the fishes?’ Tim laughed maniacally inside, yet did not dare to show it. ‘If that old fellow knows about this intelligence report, will he get so angry that he’ll breathe his last?’

“Father! We have the latest news of our family’s fleet!” Tim’s voice was a mix of unease and apprehension, as though he was a criminal waiting to be executed.

“Come in!” Marquis Louis’ voice came from the within the room as he tried to repress his anger. Tim sneered secretly, and entered.

The marquis’ study was currently very messy. Shattered glass and porcelain shards were strewn across the floor. On the desk lay a dead body, totally void of life.

It was a young and beautiful female servant. Her eyes seemed to show a longing for survival, and her body was covered with traces of abuse, particularly the bruises on her neck, which were the main culprits that led to her death.

“Someone, tidy up this place!” Marquis Louis adjusted his shirt collar. With his order, an expressionless butler entered with a few maids, and they quickly cleared up the entire study room.

When the door closed, only Tim and Marquis Louis were left. Seeing that the marquis had seemingly regained peace after venting his anger, Tim suddenly felt a chill in his heart for some reason.

“Father...” Tim tried his best to make his voice appear more sorrowful.

“Speak... Have those bunch of morons been completely wiped out?” Marquis Louis sat on his soft armchair, his expression without a hint of grief or delight.

“Yes. Our family’s military fleet was besieged by the Scarlet Tigers and the Barbarians, and has confirmed to have been totally defeated near the Baltic archipelago.”

What Tim did not expect was that Marquis Louis’ expression did not change much after hearing such earth-shattering news, as though he had long predicted it.

“I know... After the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates were destroyed, our family’s fleet walked down the same road as well? Heh heh... From today onwards, the Gold Thornblossoms’ authority over the Dambrath seas will be thoroughly destroyed...”

The marquis’ eyes seemed unusually bloodshot. It was the pain and insanity of having his life’s work ruined.

However, Tim actually felt more at ease after witnessing this. He would be assured only if the marquis was in such a state.

“Give instructions to prepare to leave this place!” Marquis Louis said to Tim.

“Leave? To where?” Tim seemed rather puzzled.

“Return to the mainland, the Dambrath capital. It’s no longer safe here with the great loss we’ve suffered in our strength. Those pirates will frantically pounce on us like starving dogs. We must leave as soon as possible while their mind is still on the other ports and wealth.”

Marquis Louis explained indifferently as he gazed at Tim with a gentle look in his eyes. “Tim, you’re now my only adult son. As long as we live, the kingdom will not let the Baltic archipelago have a change of ownership.”

The delayed trust made Tim feel as though there were two hot streams crashing into his eyes. He pouted, but said nothing in the

end.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Muffled cannon blasts sounded in the study, interspersed with the whistles of pirates. No matter how good the sound-proofing was, the noise could not be blocked out.

“What’s going on?” Marquis Louis ran to the window and opened it. The sounds became clearer, and he could see many clouds of black smoke. There were even silhouettes of hordes of pirates.

“How could they intrude so quickly? What about the fort and sentinel points that the team of guards had set up? Why aren’t they of any use? Could it be...”

Marquis Louis could finally smell conspiracy. Although he had lost his soul after his beloved son died in battle and after his maritime fleet was entirely wiped out, the marquis who had endured the test of battle immediately reacted at this critical juncture, but it was all too late.

He suddenly turned around, and immediately met with a pair of eyes resembling a wolf’s!

.....

“Kill!” “Heh heh... Charge!”

Numerous pirates roared wildly. After destroying the battery and several guard assembly points, the other pirates spread themselves

out like maniacs. They charged towards to the refined stores and enormous mansions like wild dogs.

Smashing sounds could be heard everywhere, and lone pirates with luxurious silk hung around their necks and their pockets stuffed with huge amounts of jewelry and gold coins could be seen scuttling across the streets from time to time.

Of course, there were bound to be massacres and death, and even little children could not run from their fate. Women were being disgraced in many dim corners, as they let out sorrowful cries.

Restraining the pirates like they were a military troop would be a joke. These pirates were excited by the tremendous amount of wealth here after they had abruptly broken into the place. They were like rats that had fallen into a rice vat, and had exposed the most despicable side of humanity.

In order to cause the greatest amount of wreckage, Leylin had even lowered his standards. He'd recruited a huge bunch of inferior pirate vassals, and brought them here. These were the scum of all scum, and they instantly displayed their powerful destructive abilities.

One could see that the entire harbour wouldn't regain its popularity in the next few years after this ended.

On the largest battleship equipped with magical armor—the Scarlet Tiger— Leylin put down the telescope in his hands as he revealed a satisfied expression.

“Excellent. That’s right, kill them all, rob them all, burn them all! When we depart, all I need is to see a wasteland!” Leylin was now wearing a silver mask, and so was Isabel.

They were still noblemen after all, and naturally had to be mindful. Otherwise, they would meet with trouble in the kingdom if they left some magical image behind. Even though the mask covered his expression, Leylin was now like a respected devil of the underworld. His aura made other pirates retreat one by one, their faces filled with panic and fear.

The Baltic archipelago was the feudal land of the kingdom after all, and Leylin could not brazenly occupy this place openly. Thus, he wanted to completely destroy everything here, and turn this beautiful and wealthy archipelago into a purgatory. It would never be able to contest for the spot of an offshore trading centre with Faulen Island henceforth!

“You will see it!” Isabel’s eyes were rather bloodshot. Her aura once again began to rise sharply.

Such slaughter and chaos were evidently a demon’s favourite. If she was able to conduct a ritual before they pillaged the place, perhaps they would reap even greater profits.

But Leylin wouldn’t let her do that, of course. Once devils and demons were involved in something, it would definitely attract the attention of the church. He was still unable to contend against those colossal beings.

“Tim’s map of the port’s defences shows that there are still some forts, and also the residences of several people in authority and their strength. It can’t get any easier to raze this port to ruin.” A harbour was completely different with intel on it than without. Tim had an extremely high status, which was of huge benefit to Leylin as a spy.

At this moment, Robin Hood came forward to report to Leylin. “Boss! The troops stationed here have already been completely wiped out. Ronald is currently bringing our men to attack Marquis Louis’s mansion.” His body was covered with many bloodstains, and there were even pieces of meat and other items hanging from the blade of his sword.

“Marquis Louis must die here! The others don’t matter.”

Marquis Louis was an old fox after all. If he escaped, there might be other troubles that would ensue. Leylin wasn’t that idle to fool around with him.

“That Tim...” Robin Hood seemed like he wanted to say something but stopped himself.

“Depends on his luck. Marquis Louis has a few other children who are not of age yet anyway. We just need someone to succeed the Gold Thornblossom family, so that their feudal land will not be confiscated by the kingdom.”

Leylin waved his hands. “Come with me, there are even more

important things to do!”

To Leylin, two places here were the most important sources of wealth. One was the official residence of the marquis, and the other was naturally where Boruj gathered the materials for his wizard tower.

Chapter 853 - Assassination

Boruj was a high-level wizard who led a luxurious life and had a respectable position across the entire Dambrath Kingdom. The only reason he was following Louis in developing the outer seas was because the marquis had promised to construct a wizard tower for him.

This was a wizard tower, something all high-level wizards needed to conduct more profound research into other planes. It was how they raised their ranks. High-level wizards with the protection of a tower were miles ahead of vagrants with nothing to their name.

Given the many advantages, there was no doubt that the construction of a wizard tower was just as horrifying in its expense. Even the cheapest one costed more than two million gold coins.

Leylin was sure that Marquis Louis had invested close to half of his trade profits into this wizard tower which was still under construction. For him, this was equivalent to a gift from heaven. If he could completely plunder these supplies, it would be much easier for him to build a wizard tower for himself in the future.

Leylin had already found the construction blueprint unique to the wizard tower in Boruj's bag of holding, but the base materials were also very precious. Marquis Louis had spent an endless amount of money and manpower to transport them from remote parts of the distant mainland.

He brought his men to the designated location for the wizard tower by following Tim's map. There were already several camps here, and a simple foundation for the tower had already been laid.

"If we really had let him build his wizard tower, we absolutely wouldn't have been able to break through the port's defence today. It's even possible that we'd have suffered a total defeat," Leylin said with a lingering fear to the people next to him, as he saw that the project had just begun.

However, the camp was now in chaos. Many corpses were strewn messily across the place, and it was filled with pirates in a killing frenzy as they dashed from one room to another.

"Stop them!" Leylin waved his hands. He didn't have a twinge of mercy for those random pirates who went crazy with bloodlust and lacked discipline.

Robin Hood brought his men over and started hacking frantically at the other pirates right away. When several of the pirates who were roaring away were beheaded, the remaining few finally came to their senses.

"Put down the things you robbed, or you will die here." Leylin spoke indifferently, looking as terrifying as a devil to them.

Under the threat of death, most of the pirates obediently threw out the items in their hands, and rushed towards the port. There was also an endless amount of wealth there, and giving up their lives here was not worth it at all.

However, there were still a minority of the pirates who coveted and could not let go of the riches in their hands. With a wave of Leylin's hand, Robin Hood and his men immediately went towards those stubborn pig heads.

“Open the storehouse!” Once they were done purging the entire area, Robin Hood grabbed a person who seemed to be in charge. Using his blade that was covered in fresh blood, he forced him to open all the storehouses one by one.

In that split second, Leylin's men were immediately dazzled by a colourful radiance.

“Diamonds, ironwood, the core for configuring puppets, and so many wizarding alloys... Not bad, not bad, these are all goods that aren't available overseas, and are necessary to build a wizard tower.”

On top of that, Leylin had even found a tiny warehouse after cracking a tiny mechanism, which stored copious amounts of mithril and pure gold. These two metals could absorb magic very well, and were precious materials required in many wizarding items.

‘These are probably only a part of it!’ Leylin sighed sorrowfully. “Slave trading is indeed the most profitable business!”

This was undoubtedly the reason why his family didn't engage in the trade of refined sugar and fish floss for long, or else they would

have been able to accumulate an unimaginable sum of wealth.

“Organize the men. Move all of this onto the Scarlet Tiger, and specially assign people to guard it!” Leylin instructed Robin Hood. Then, he brought Isabel and the others next to the marquis’ residence which had already been besieged.

Ronald was now launching a violent attack with his men, but the people inside were resisting tenaciously. What Marquis Louis had accumulated over the decades wouldn’t be destroyed so easily. Even if they had already gotten rid of most of his men at sea, there would still be faithful officials appearing at times like this.

However, their pointless resistance dissolved into nothing after Leylin appeared. With just a few fireball spells, the entrance to the marquis’ mansion was completely blasted open, revealing the interior of the building in all its dazzling and glorious splendor.

Isabel dashed in like a valkyrie, her black magical longsword taking in its fill of hot blood. She didn’t have any mercy whatsoever towards these foes who had caused her family to perish.

Leylin called Ronald over and gave him a grim order, “Ronald, tell those pirates that the entire marquis’ mansion and a few of the other important storehouses are ours. Anyone who dares to covet them will be killed right away!”

He wasn’t some kind of saint; he had gathered all these miscellaneous pirates here only to strengthen his influence. He

was already kind enough to let them plunder the place wilfully, how could he give them the greatest benefits?

“Yes, young master!” Ronald was brimming with enthusiasm and vigour. He, too, had a burning hatred towards Marquis Louis’ family. Now that he had gotten his revenge, he was full of so much admiration towards Leylin that he would kneel at his feet.

The entire process was going rather smoothly. While Ronald was directing his men to empty the stores, Leylin had already obtained a battle report from Isabel.

“The entire mansion has crumbled completely. Other than Tim and a few others, the rest have been arrested, and even Marquis Louis was found dead in his study, is that alright?”

“It’s enough, let’s go!” Leylin sneered as he scanned the city centre. A few places were still rather tranquil, and were even radiating light—that was the location of the church!

Even a bishop would be unable to obstruct the tsunami of pirates, and could only passively rely on the powers of the god in their church to strengthen their defense.

Leylin certainly wouldn’t be so foolish as to let his men attack the church. As for the other miscellaneous pirates who had already lost their minds, he naturally didn’t have to bother about them anymore.

Moreover, Leylin's attack this time was achieved by catching the marquis off guard. If the other churches reacted and even colluded with each other, it would be very troublesome for him.

"Yes, young master! The other pirates?" Ronald saluted with his right hand on his chest.

"They came for wealth, and will now die here because of wealth. Isn't it perfectly normal?" Under the influence of a crazed atmosphere, there would only be a handful of pirates who would eventually discover danger, promptly wrap up their business here, and leave. Besides, if they could achieve this, then they would naturally have the right to continue living.

The Scarlet Tiger and a few battleships departed the harbour, which had already degraded into a living hell. They even lit up a few large fires, yet it did not attract the attention of many pirates. Those soaking in madness and slaughter would always have a relatively slow reaction towards the outside world.

A few rays of holy light obstinately shot out from the flames, even protecting the surrounding civilians. It was just that there seemed to be a few shadows within the rays of light emitting from the church.

"Heh heh... The church of the God of Murder? We will settle our debts one day..." Leylin smiled sarcastically. The look in his eyes was serene, yet it seemed to contain a devilish glint.

.....

“Respected bishop, all the pathfinders have assembled, and are ready to set off any moment!” A young female priest looked across the refugees in the plaza of the church, her face flushed red with indignance and her gaze filled with pity.

“Those damn pirates! The light of our God will purify them completely one day!” The young female priest said, aggrieved.

The elderly bishop’s eyes seemed to contain the entire world, yet they were also brimming with a soft luster. He slowly started to pray to the sculpture of Ilmater in the centre of the church.

“Dear god, take pity on the common people! Alice, you have to understand that our forces are unable to contend against all those pirates outside. We must wait for a suitable opportunity...” The bishop’s voice was aged but resolute, yet seemed to have some sort of calming powers that allowed the young female priest to attain peace within her heart.

At this moment, a figure hurriedly ran in. “Sir! A priest of the church of Lathander is requesting to meet you!”

“Very well, invite him in quickly!” There was a glimmer of joy on the bishop’s face.

Lathander the Morninglord was a deity with a formidable occult force. He bore an intense hatred towards all kinds of evil and sordid behaviour, and his priests were unyielding towards cracking down on dark forces. With the assistance of his pathfinders in

quelling the entire harbour, there would be hope in restoring peace!

“Respected bishop!” A priest with lustrous golden hair, clothed in a Morninglord priest gown entered with quick steps, an extremely resentful expression on his face. “Our church will dispatch all the forces we have on hand to attack those vicious people. I hope we will be able to receive your help!”

“But of course, we will not shirk our duty. I-Eek!” The bishop turned to look at his chest, stunned. A black dagger had been thrust into it, the blood like a blooming rose as it spread under it unceasingly.

A malicious curse immediately invaded the wound, one that even a divine spell couldn’t dispel.

“You... You’re not a Morninglord priest...” The bishop slowly collapsed. In the final moments of his life, he saw the priest’s face change weirdly, and it eventually became the face of a sinister person. He started slaughtering everyone around him as he laughed maniacally, and the young priest Alice fell into a pool of blood.

“Shadow Jump!” After assassinating the bishop, the assassin who was above rank 15 immediately mobilized a high-level technique and vanished into thin air. With the convenience of the shadow plane, he had arrived somewhere else when he reappeared.

Chapter 854 - Change In Events

“My lord, Ilmater’s bishop has fallen!” The high-ranked assassin respectfully reported to the people next to him.

“You did well!” Beside him was evidently the bishop of the God of Murder at Pirates’ Cove. At some point in time, he had come to the Baltic archipelago and hidden himself in the shadows, killing the regional bishop of the God of Suffering.

“Master, please accept this offering from your humble servant!” Seeing a broken ray of light amidst the sea of fire, the bishop of the God of Murder flushed as he knelt and began to pray. This light belonged to the church of suffering.

A pair of powerful eyes focused on this area, strong enough for even the high-ranked assassin to sense. This was the strength of the god that he believed in, of Cyric the God of Murder!

His eyes filled with elation, and the radiance of divine force flickered into existence.

‘Grace of the Gods! It’s the grace that will raise his ranking permanently!’ The high-ranked assassin saw the light shining on the bishop’s body, as well as the increase in his aura. The bishop’s eyes burnt with more fervour as he began to pray silently, “Dear master Cyrik, you are...”

.....

The unrestrained acts of the pirates continued for several days. The Scarlet Tigers and Barbarians acted separately, conducting surprise attacks on all of the Baltic archipelago's ports and cities. There were also other 'fake' pirates mixed in, following their bosses as they wreaked havoc while robbing all that was in front of their eyes. This was a feast for pirates!

Cyric's priests seemed to be acting from the shadows in these outrageous events, apparently with the God of Murder's divine force mixed in. It made it seem like there really was a conspiracy afoot.

It was even said that the chaos and massacre here had attracted the attention of demons and devils from the abyss. Someone had personally witnessed their marks on the ruined corpses from the calamity.

This immediately caused concern in the Dambrath Kingdom. An investigation team formed of elite priests and paladins of the God of Justice Tyr swore to find the main culprit and punish them.

Accompanying the investigative team was a special envoy sent by the king, responsible to confirm the survival of the descendants of the Together with this investigative team was a special envoy sent down by the king. He was responsible for confirming the survival of the descendants of the Golden Thornblossom family, as well as the cause of Marquis Louis' death. Of course, that was all a front. What truly attracted one's attention was the Baltic archipelago, and the fertile territories on the seas.

It was a pity that they were destined to be disappointed. After the pirate attack, the Baltic archipelago had lost over 50% of its population and much of its amassed wealth. The other ports and cities were burnt to nothing, turning into dead regions no merchants were willing to go to.

Trading in the outer seas had begun to shift towards other noble families' islands. The Faulen Island obviously got the most out of it, and began to develop rapidly. It even began to try taking over the spaces that Marquis Louis had left behind, laying its hands on the slave trade.

Leylin had now assembled his subordinates on the Scarlet Tiger ship, announcing a decision.

“I plan to leave for a while, I plan to travel the continent.” Leylin looked solemn as he saw his trusted aides in the captain's room. This was a decision he had made after careful deliberations.

There was no way around it. He had gone too far this time, and it was necessary that he hide it out for a while. In addition, the outer seas were now gaining even more attention from even the gods. It was truly an unsuitable area for him to continue keeping a low profile.

“After I leave, the Scarlet Pirates will be under Isabel's command. You must listen to her as you do me, is that understood?” After all the members left, Leylin made Isabel stay behind.

“Are you really leaving?” Isabel gazed at Leylin's handsome face,

looking reluctant.

“I’ve no choice! While everything might seem great with us now, we still need to be cautious!” Leylin’s eyes were on Isabel as he began to instruct her, “I’ve already completely broken off relations between the Scarlet Tiger pirates and the family. I’ve even killed off all the disloyal ones, so it should be fine for you to take over. As long as neither of us are caught, it’s impossible to get real evidence!”

The only connection between the Faulen Family and the Scarlet Tigers was Leylin. Without him there, the investigators could only watch helplessly. The churches and the kingdom naturally still needed evidence to act openly.

“And though the Barbarians have parted ways with us, I’m not worried about them. We have power on the surface!”

“Power on the surface?” Isabel looked doubtful.

“Yes. After I get back, I’ll suggest that Father build a military fleet of our own. This is something pirates will never be able to do.” Leylin’s eyes flickered with extraordinary intelligence.

“There are only two sides of the outer sea, the light and the dark. In the dark, there’s the Scarlet Tiger pirates contending with them, but they can’t do anything against us in broad daylight. After all, commerce will never be able to match up to the power of nobility! With this advantage, we’ll definitely be able to suppress them, turning into the next Marquis Louis and gaining supremacy

in the outer seas!”

Leylin shared his complete development strategy, “Do you understand what I’m saying?”

“We just have to make our foundations stable?” Isabel was intelligent.

“Yes, it’s all about stability! Once we completely take over the outer seas, the churches won’t be able to do anything even if they know about our actions.”

“What do you mean?” Isabel was astonished.

“It’s power!” Leylin waved his hands, “As long as the outer seas are under our control, the churches can’t put us on trial even if they know we’ve sinned. They have to spread their own faith as well.”

With his abundant life experience, what could Leylin not see through?

“Look. Even if Marquis Louis was involved in the sinful slave trade, with his hands dipped in blood, he had control over the profits in the outer seas and had close relations with the kingdom. Even a priest of the God of Justice couldn’t put him on trial!”

Leylin’s eyes blazed with ambition, “As long as we’re superior on the outer seas, those churches will only be able to lower their

heads to us!”

Obviously, Leylin had failed to mention something. At the beginning, they could learn to do what Marquis Louis had, but after that, there had to be changes. He already had a plan for that.

In order to control the outer seas, his own strength was also vital. He believed they needed a Legend in charge at the minimum, but if everything went according to plan it was still feasible. By the time his family had gotten to that point, he'd have become a Legend himself.

This was the realm of Legends, people who had a say in the entire World of Gods! After all, the gods couldn't descend to the prime material plane in their own bodies, only able to do so through incarnations that weren't much stronger than high-ranked Legends.

Of course, Leylin only had the guts to do this in the outer seas, where the gods' organisations were frail. Otherwise, he would just be seeking his death!

“With those pirates in the middle being scapegoats for us, the churches won't go after us right away. Our Scarlet Tiger pirates must be aware of this!” Leylin estimated that the Barbarians would not grow hostile to them right away. Instead, they would absorb the surrounding pirates and increase their strength.

For this reason, however, they would attract even more attention, and unknowingly take the brunt of it from the Scarlet

Tigers. Meanwhile, the Scarlet Tigers would keep a low profile and amass more power, waiting for an opportunity to rise.

Only after his plans were completely explained did Leylin leave, feeling at ease. Seeing Leylin's figure flying in the horizon and turning into a black spot that eventually disappeared, Isabel turned with an icy look on her face.

“Gather all the leaders. We are to hide in the deep seas for a period of time!”

“Understood!” Ronald shrank back. He had a feeling that after the head left, the “Scarlet Witch” that struck the outer seas with terror would return.

Ronald was aware that she would not make allowances for anyone else, destroying anyone she caught. He did not dare complain and jogged away from the deck.

With Isabel pressurising them, the Scarlet Tigers pirates carried out Leylin's plans exceedingly well, hiding in the deep sea.

Dambrath only held a small portion of the outer seas, and the further out one went the more dangerous it was. It was rumoured that there was a country of aboriginals at the depths of the sea, protected by the gods. Of course, this was just a rumour.

The Scarlet Tigers' actions wisely allowed them to evade a round of unrest. The organisations of the outer sea and the enraged

nobles of the Dambrath Kingdom combined forces with the church, beginning a new round of purging the outer sea pirates. Even the navy was employed.

The priests and paladins of the God of Justice could be seen roaming around at this point. The pirates that had just started to get arrogant were put in a tough spot as they were stabilising themselves. Many were exterminated, and even the Barbarians suffered huge losses with no choice but to do things on the sly.

Whatever it was, the sea was vast. The Dambrath Kingdom had no way to maintain the huge expenses of the navy, and this could only terrorise the region for a while. After the navy left, this would still be the pirates' territory!

The reshuffling from this new round continued. The Faulen Family would make use of their status as nobility, trading their two profitable goods into becoming the hub of the outer seas. Of course, that was all in the future.

Chapter 855 - Emon City

Emon was a port city along the coast of the Dambrath Kingdom. It relied on the flourishing trade of the outer seas to develop, and at one point had over ten thousand free citizens making up its society. The lights never went out at night, and it created the image of prosperity.

However, the Pirates' Tide in the outer seas, especially after the ransacking of the Baltic archipelago, stopped the sea trade for a while. Many small merchants had even committed suicide in the sea out of bankruptcy, leading to a further decline in prosperity.

This was all until one day, when a young man in grey robes came to the city gates.

"Entry fee is a copper coin!" As they had been standing guard here for a long time, the two guards had developed great insight. Noticing that this young man was not to be messed with, they did not create much trouble. After handing over the fee, the young man entered Emon City.

The city's roads were desolate, with guards patrolling everywhere. Since this was a port on the sea, there was a theoretical chance of pirate attacks, and those timid aristocrats and nobles were scared stupid by the Pirates' Tide, increasing the city's security. Most of them had probably hidden themselves further inside the mainland by now.

"I'll probably need to go the Mercenary Guild later!" After

finding an inn, the young man slipped his hood off, revealing curly hair that was as dazzling as gold and a handsome face.

This was obviously Leylin. After taking care of all the matters and handing over all sorts of materials to Ernest, causing him to go giddy in his ecstasy and begin construction of a wizard's tower, Leylin openly left Faulen Island, taking a ship to the continent.

Of course, this was in the name of travel and learning, something that was a matter of course for wizards. He currently held a recommendation letter from Ernest in his lap, something that would allow him to train in the capital's Wizards' Guild for a while.

Leylin had intended this trip for a while, there was nothing that Ernest could teach him anymore. And with Boruj's bag of holding, he could now move about with more ease. 10 cubic metres of space was huge, and he could put his tent, rations, and essentials inside it, making things less difficult for him.

After getting on the coast, Leylin was like a drop of water that disappeared into the river of people. Things were rather sensitive right now, and he did not want to cause any trouble.

Travelling at this point was a very troublesome matter. If he lacked proof of free citizenship from the city hall or some other documents like that, he'd be treated like a runaway slave or indentured farmer. The rest of his life would be spent in jail or bankruptcy.

Of course, if he showed his proof of nobility, all cities would leave their doors wide open for him. But he wasn't foolish enough to do that.

If he became a mercenary, he would be able to move about with no obstruction in most areas, though the guards would roll their eyes at him. Mercenaries who broke order were one of the most headache-inducing issues for security officials.

The Mercenary Guild was located by the Warriors' Guild, one of their requirements was that one was a Professional.

Of course, this wasn't too hard. If he trained for many years, could use a few weapons proficiently and had a certain amount of experience, he could easily be certified as a rank 1 fighter.

Leylin entered the Warriors' Guild that was guarded by two burly warriors, in the distance seeing shrines to the gods of warriors and war. There were even a few resident priests in the guild, overseeing everything. They were in charge of healing injuries, even though it obviously came with a price.

Behind the Warriors' Guild were a few bigshots. Without their support both on the surface and in the shadows, it would have had no chance to spread throughout the continent. Since warriors were the most common Professionals amongst the many races, becoming one did not require much talent.

"Is this Mister's first time here?" After seeing Leylin's entrance, a maid welcomed him while watching him with a strange look.

After all, most warriors were muscled, and it was rare to see people like Leylin.

“Yes. I would like to apply for the fighter test!” Though the Wizards’ Guild was more suitable for him, and being a wizard would gain him more respect, Leylin was here to stay out of trouble. He naturally wouldn’t do that. He was not even planning to use the recommendation letter Ernest had given him.

“Please come with me!” The maid brought Leylin to the second level of the guild. There were many little rings here, where warriors were fighting hand-to-hand or battling it out. While they were using wooden swords, people would still get injured.

At this moment, a priest that had been waiting at the side would be useful.

“Please register first. May I know which rank would you like to take the test for?”

As if afraid that Leylin did not understand well and because of his face, the maid explained to him enthusiastically, “Our tests here are conducted based on varying levels of strength. You’ll need to fight against a similarly-ranked or two lower-ranked opponents for a period of time to be able to pass the test, and there are often casualties...”

“Thank you for your good intentions. I’ll do what I can!” Leylin came to a counter and put in his particulars, filling up the form.

“Let’s see. Your name is Ley, you’re 18, and you want to take the test for a rank 5 warrior?” Sitting at the counter was a withered old man. He lifted his glasses and looked at Leylin, who was outside, “Young man, don’t try to push yourself too far. A rank 5 warrior can already use their qi, and some have even grasped battle techniques. You could maybe try rank 3...”

“What? You’re choosing the rank 5 test?” The maid looked astonished, her sharp voice causing surrounding people to gather around and watch.

“Why didn’t you listen to me?” The maid stamped her feet, pretty flushes appearing on her cheeks.

“I’ve already made up my mind, I’ll do this!” Leylin furrowed his brows. While he had lied about his age, this was still shocking.

Of course, it wasn’t that bad. It was much better than being a 16 year old rank 10 wizard, and he then nodded, “Please accept this application.”

“The application fee is 10 copper coins!” After Leylin paid up, the old man sighed helplessly, “Teenagers these days...”

“Interesting! I haven’t seen such an interesting kid for a long time! Let me be his opponent!” A forthright voice sounded out, and immediately after a burly man who was two heads taller than average pushed the crowd away as he walked over. His upper body was naked, the muscles solid like granite. There were several scabs

from blades on his face, emanating red light that made him seem more menacing.

“It’s the Bone Shatterer, Fafnir. This guy’s in for it!”

“It’s rumoured that he’s a savage person who likes to pinch and shatter his opponent’s bones. Why’s he suddenly causing trouble for a kid?”

“It should be for a woman, right? He’s been interested in Nina for a long time!” This immediately caused the maid to blush beet red, “Fafnir, what are you doing?”

“Nothing much. I’m a rank 5 warrior anyway, so isn’t it normal for me to be an examiner? Am I wrong?” Fafnir watched Leylin, a malicious smile on his face.

“What about it?” He looked at the old man at the counter.

“You can give up on this test and come back tomorrow,” The old man sighed. He probably did not want to see a young man like Leylin having such a great setback.

Leylin was speechless inside. He hadn’t expected to meet such a vulgar person.

“It’s fine, he’ll do.” Wait till tomorrow? He didn’t have that much time to waste.

“I won’t worry about you anymore!” This nonchalant attitude resulted in Nina leaving while fuming in anger. Meanwhile, a crisp explosion could be heard produced from Fafnir’s hands.

“Kid, you’re dead meat. I want to pinch and shatter all the bones in your body bit by bit. Hope that you won’t hurt bad enough to call for your mother...” While brushing past him, Fafnir looked at Leylin and made a gesture as if slitting his throat.

“Don’t worry. Isn’t there a priest? I actually hope you brought enough money...” Leylin rolled his shoulders and picked up the long sword used for the testing.

As it was wooden, the handle was very light. However, there was a layer of metal on the blade that made it seem more durable.

The two slowly walked into the ring, and the judge then waved his right arm downwards. “Ready? Begin!”

“Destroy him, Bone Shatterer!”

“I’m supporting you, kid. Hang on!” The other bored warriors immediately began to jeer, and a few got the bets going, on how many moves Leylin could take from Fafnir.

Nina reappeared in the audience, watching the centre of the site anxiously.

“Kid, repent in hell!” Fafnir yelled as he charged.

This speed and technique was far from what Jacob had at the beginning, and Leylin could only shake his head inside. However, he did need to conceal his strength too, and he only dodged ‘by a hair’s breadth’, sword swinging onto his opponent’s shoulder.

“Stop wasting time! I’ve things to do!” A faint layer of qi emanated from Leylin’s body.

“It’s qi! This guy’s already activated qi!!” The onlookers exclaimed.

“This kid’s not bad!” Fafnir immediately began to get serious, and he wrapped himself up in these rays as well. An opponent who had already activated qi was not so easily defeated.

“Battle technique: Shatter Bones!” He accelerated, charging towards Leylin.

Chapter 856 - Mercenary

“Fafnir actually used a battle technique!” The audience all exclaimed.

“How boring!” Leylin slipped past the opponent’s slashing while his wooden sword pierced forward.

“Battle technique: Charge!” An immense force struck Fafnir, causing his huge body to fly like a sandbag. However, Leylin’s attack hadn’t ended yet. He seemed to turn into a gust of wind, sticking close to the hulking man who was in mid-air.

Crack! Crash! Terrifying sounds of bones shattering were heard. When Fafnir fell, his arms and legs were all twisted at strange angles, and he even fainted.

“How is it? Did I pass?” Leylin looked at the judge, who seemed dazed.

“Oh. I announce that Ley has passed this test!” He finally said, as if he’d woken from a dream. The surrounding crowd began to make a ruckus.

Leylin cared little about this, and he went to the counter. This time the crowd opened up a path automatically, respecting the strong.

The old man chuckled as he asked, “Hehe... I don’t often make

mistakes! Kid, any interest in learning here for a period of time?”

“No thanks. I still have something urgent to do!” Leylin had seen that this old man was about rank 10 as a warrior. This was pretty good, but he’d almost killed a dozen high-ranked warriors himself on the outer seas.

“Alright! Sigh, young people these days...” The old man lethargically flung a copper badge to Leylin, as well as a piece of parchment, “Take it. This is your warrior badge and verification. That’ll be two silver kronas.”

This was slightly too expensive and seemed to be on purpose. However, since he was very efficient, Leylin paid the bill and quickly left.

After walking out of the warrior guild, Leylin went to the Mercenary Guild next door. The gold behind the counter revealed a professional smile, “Welcome. May I know if you are here to issue a mission or to apply for remuneration?”

“I’m here to apply to be a mercenary!” Leylin stated his purpose.

“Please go to counter number 3!” Applying to become a mercenary was very simple, and only required proof of one’s Profession. After seeing Leylin’s rank 5 fighter badge, the person in charge of counter 3 happily helped him with the proof of being one.

As a newbie, Leylin had no choice but to become a copper-grade mercenary, which was the lowest rank. Only after completing multiple missions could he advance. However, being verified as a mercenary and Professional. He would be able to enter the large cities in the future.

For Leylin, who looked towards becoming a god, focusing on raising his mercenary ranking was a joke.

‘Since my path is now decided, next is go to the Dambrath Kingdom and study at the Wizards’ Guild... Or should I go to another country... It’s said that Moonlight City in the north has a whole set of information on magic. The city owner might even be someone chosen by the Goddess of the Weave, and many of their advanced wizard spells can be compared with the elves. I can consider training there for a while...’

Information on high-ranked spells in this world was highly confidential, and if Leylin wanted to gain this knowledge he would have to enter some large organisations to be acknowledged.

Of course, he could also ignore that and focus on raising his wizard ranking first. However, his battle might would then be pitiful. If a high-ranked wizard only grasped a few spells, that would be a disgrace to all of the same rank as him.

‘Come to think of it, I wonder if the spell models of varying ranks in the Magus World can be modified to be used in the World of Gods? But the amount of time required for that would be too terrifying...’

Leylin had a tentative plan to make the path of Magi available to the World of Gods. It was an all-inclusive path that centered around the truth, and of all the paths to power it was very flexible and adaptable.

It was plausible to conduct research into producing Magi in the World of Gods, people who could cast spells without the Weave. However, that would require a great deal of processing power. Most of the A.I. Chip's resources were focused on the analysis of the Weave, and in a situation where it had no spare time to run simulations in this area he could only shelve his plans for now.

‘Research on casting spells without the Weave is definitely a huge taboo in the World of Gods. I’m afraid I’ll only be able to do something in that field after I become a Legend.’

Leylin stroked his chin, ‘But if I’m able to get information on this, even if incomplete, the A.I. Chip’s rate of analysis will be increased by a great amount... I’m sure there were many Magi participating in the Ancient War who had the same thoughts as I do now...’

While thinking this, Leylin entered the mission hall in the Mercenary Guild. Numerous large fireplaces were blazing in the place, making the hall seem cozy. The many mercenaries were split into their own cliques. Some were drinking and making merry, while others were gazing at the huge mission board at the centre of the hall, discussing things amongst themselves occasionally.

The aroma of strong rum, coupled with that of roasted meat and bread, lingered in Leylin's nose.

“High-grade mission: Purging ogres! Only mercenary groups that are gold-ranked and above may take this on.” This mission was on the top of the board, written in huge bold font. The great rewards caused many mercenaries to drool at the sight, but few dared to go forward.

“Yeah! I heard that a bunch of ogres migrated towards one of the main paths to the capital. They've already attacked numerous caravans and passersby, it's no wonder that the rewards are so plentiful!”

Hearing the surrounding mercenaries whispering amongst themselves, Leylin had a better understanding of the mission.

‘An ogre tribe? No wonder it's a high-ranked mission!’ Leylin nodded inside. The classification of mercenaries was very simple. The lowest was copper, followed by silver and gold. Gold mercenaries were already high-grade and possessed immense experience, and were usually powerful Professionals.

Above gold-rank, was said to be Mithril and Platinum. However, in general, they would not be in such people a small city like Emon City.

Gold-ranked mercenary groups were powerful troops with numerous gold-ranked mercenaries. Only this level of strength would be effective against an ogre tribe.

Leylin looked at the bottom of the mission board. There were many missions to clear ogres out here and there, from the lowest ranked to powerful ogre shamans. All that one was required to do was bring back their ears as proof, and the difficulty was lower. Once in a while, a few mercenaries would go over to discuss before taking on the missions.

“A large-scale ogre tribe has more than 200 ogres. The shamans will have bloodlines, with abilities similar to magic. On top of that, the ogres themselves are resistant to magic...” Leylin muttered to himself.

“I won’t be able to handle this myself unless I take the long route. However, that’ll consume a lot of time, and I’ll need to pass through a few dangerous regions, and the danger isn’t all that different from the ogre tribes. There are even drake tribes there...”

“Seems like I’ll have to wait for some large-scaled mercenary groups to complete missions or join some caravan...” Leylin mumbled to himself. He was preparing to go to the capital, and even without Ernest’s recommendation letter, he had enough power to enter the Wizards’ Guild. Over there, he would be able to obtain the newest intel and the like.

“On top of that, even if I were to prepare to travel to the north to train, I’ll definitely need to pass through the Dambrath Kingdom...” Leylin sighed. He went to the front desk counter near him belonging to the guild, “Give me cider. Are there any missions soon that will take me to the capital? The best would be those with large groups. I want something safe!”

As he said this, a silver krona appeared in his hand, emitting a tempting light in the air.

“Do you have urgent matters to attend to in the capital? That’s no problem at all. A large caravan is going there soon, and they’re recruiting people because of those wretched ogres!” Seeing the light in Leylin’s hands, the attendant gulped and then responded. A tyrant like Leylin obviously gained more abundant and specific details.

After setting a time with the attendant, Leylin headed to the entrance of the Mercenary Guild. The streets of Emon City were very desolate, probably having to do with the double blow with the sea trade and the ogres.

Seeing the many stores that were closed, Leylin was about to return to meditate in his inn when a grey-robed person blocked his way.

“Mister, please whip me ruthlessly!” In front of Leylin was a young female in grey robes. She was pretty and was clad in coarse sackcloth clothing, and there were also many scars at her neck and cuffs.

Currently, she was standing in front of him with a look of anticipation, two hands holding a thorny whip. The numerous tiny thorns looked extremely sinister on it.

She looked pure and holy, ready to die for a just cause, and had a

resoluteness that only belonged to crazed followers. There was even a hint of anticipation.

“What’s with this... a trap?” Leylin’s eyes went past the crazy woman and landed on a little girl next to her. She was holding a donation box of the church, and after noticing his attention was on her, she especially shook the box such that the coins inside made sharp and crisp noises.

Leylin saw a strange holy emblem at the little girl’s chest.

“So you’re a priest of the Mistress of the Whip!” Thankfully, Leylin had seen much in the world and recognised her identity.

“Yes! Please help with our praying ritual and allow my soul to obtain redemption through suffering!” The female answered seriously, and then thrust the whip into his hands.

“I... I... I...” Leylin was completely speechless now. He wanted to escape, but the passersby thought nothing of it. Some even looked over with knowing smiles.

Chapter 857 - Misunderstanding

The Goddess of Weeping, also known as Mistress of the Whip, was called Amyter. She was a kind-hearted goddess, and her teachings included having her followers redeem their souls through suffering.

It was like when a forest was larger, birds were all the same. In the World of Gods, a few exotic gods existed, and this crying female was one of them.

The God of Suffering, Ilmater, taught his followers to suffer and endure the pain, but Amyter was different. She even requested that her priests and followers abuse themselves and obtain redemption through suffering!

Oh Gods! Even if Ilmater requested his followers to endure, he never wanted them to actively abuse themselves!

Hence, in simpler terms, Amyter's followers were a bunch of insane people who abused themselves, especially the priests.

Whenever there was a huge celebration, Amyter's priests and followers would gather, using lashes, wooden cangues and even red hot brands to 'pray'. This would earn themselves favour from the goddess, and amongst the divine spells the goddess granted were some that raised one's endurance of pain.

Gods like these had no market amongst regular commoners and were rarely seen. Leylin had almost not recognised her at the

beginning, though she seemed to be welcomed by some exceptional enthusiasts.

This priestess of the goddess walked along the streets, praying for passersby to bestow pain on her to gain donations. This was an event that their church retained.

“I apologise, but I believe in the God of Knowledge, Oghma... This is just...” Leylin knew he was no pervert and immediately used an excuse.

“The goddess taught us not to mind the identity of the person inflicting pain on us, because they give us the redemption that is in suffering. We need to be grateful towards them... Please help me with my prayer!” The priestess looked resolute.

“I...” Leylin was rendered speechless. In addition, an increasing number of people were gathering, and he wanted to escape as soon as possible.

Just as Leylin tossed a gold coin to the little girl’s donation box and raised the whip, as if preparing to finish it in one go, he suddenly felt his hair stand on end. It was like he was being stared at by some terrifying beast.

Knowing something was off, he dodged, evading a frightening qi slash.

Crash! The powerful qi blade of light swept the area Leylin had

stood at and smashed the limestone behind him to smithereens, revealing the strength of the person who had launched the sneak attack.

Along with this attack came the dainty call from a young girl, “Ah... Such despicable behaviour of bullying women is just an insult to my way as a knight. I, Rafiniya, won’t let you off!”

“Which moron is it?”

Leylin turned back furiously. It was bad enough being requested to abuse someone by their request, but he was now being treated as a thug who was bullying the weak. Even with his thick skin, he was beginning to get ashamed.

“You dare do this but not admit to it? Everyone on the streets saw your violent behaviour, you despicable bastard!”

The person who had attacked him was a young and beautiful female knight, her wine-red long hair tied into a ponytail. Her pretty cheeks were now flushed in her anger, eyes fixed on Leylin and shooting out hatred. It was as if she could not wait to bite off a piece of flesh from Leylin.

“A high-ranked knight? Have you even made sense of the situation yet?” Leylin looked at the way this knight was dressed and the tall warhorse behind her, rather surprised.

Though they were still a physical Profession, knights were far

removed from warriors. Not only was their armour extremely expensive, but a warhorse that one could ride into battle was not so easily obtained.

A warhorse was worth over ten times as much as a regular one, and on top of that it needed a specialised groomer and other service Professionals in charge of it. In exchange, it allowed a knight's destructive power to be far ahead of a warrior's.

In addition, high-ranked ones could, after affirming their faith, turn into knights of gods, learning to cast spells. Such Professionals were the ideal prince charming in the hearts of many young girls.

‘To be able to become a high-ranked Professional at such a young age, this doll must have a pretty good background. She should be nobility...’ Leylin sized her up. Through the attack just now, he could estimate that she should be at or above rank 10 as a knight.

‘A.I. Chip, scan!’ He commanded on the inside.

[Beep! Mission established, beginning scan...]

The A.I. Chip loyally carried out his instructions, and soon enough, a passage of information was relayed.

[Name: Rafiniya. Gender: Female. Strength: 10 Agility: 6 Vitality: 7 Spirit: 5(Estimate). Rank 10 Knight. Abilities: 1. Abilities increase from 11-19% in power when mounted. 2. Armour: Full body knight armour has increased physical defence, but led to a similar decrease in resistance towards magic.]

‘As expected of a high-ranked Professional, She even has a boost from her mount!’ Leylin nodded inside. However, brazenly sizing her up was only making her more angry.

“What’s wrong with this city? How can these hoodlums commit such evil in broad daylight? Has this place turned into a city praying to the devils and demons?”

The female knight’s chest bounced up and down. The teasing gazes of the passersby only made her more infuriated.

“Please withdraw your unfair allegations!” At this moment, the priestess of Amyter stood out. “Our Lady Amyter, opposes all evil! In addition, you need to apologise for interrupting my prayer ceremony, else you’ll be profaning our Lady!”

“Huh! What? W-Why?” Rafiniya’s mouth widened slowly, and she looked stunned.

Following that, a patrol guard separated the crowd and came up to them, staring at the female knight with malicious intent, “You’ve destroyed the appearance of the city. Based on city hall

law number 329, you must pay a fine of 10 gold kronas, or else we'll have to place you in prison..."

.....

"Oh God of Justice! This actually happens? There's no such person at my old place..." After the ruckus, the surrounding crowd, patrolling soldiers and the priestess quickly left, leaving Leylin and the female knight Rafiniya behind.

However, her face was like a huge red apple. This was her shame. However, at the mention of the goddess's name, the girl immediately halted. No matter how preposterous and strange this goddess' style was, she was still a goddess! She needed to show respect at least on the surface, or she'd risk being put on trial by the other churches.

"You must be from another area, right? This goddess really doesn't have a great reputation, but it's best to find out about stuff like this before leaving on travels. The consequences of doing something taboo will be dire..." Leylin gravely reprimanded her, controlling his urge to laugh.

After the fine had been paid, the priestess of Amyter had requested a very strange compensation of Rafiniya— she wanted the knight to whip her ruthlessly!

Leylin 'kindly' handed his share of this matter over to the girl, getting her to do it as an apology. It was obviously humiliating for this knight who seemed noble and refined to lash a weak person

like a scoundrel.

Thankfully, everything was soon over, or else Leylin reckoned Rafiniya would probably commit suicide.

“I understand!” She went over to the side of her war horse, showing her back to Leylin to hide her embarrassment, “I apologise for what happened just now. I shouldn’t have treated you that way before making sense of the situation!”

As a knight, Rafiniya still did as should be based on the code of honour. At the very least, she had done well upholding justice, and was willing to change after learning that she was in the wrong.

“My name is Rafiniya, and I’m a travelling knight. Nice to meet you!”

“Mm. My name is Ley; I’m a mercenary.” Leylin scratched his head.

A travelling knight? That was practically a joke! It was well-known that knights had huge requirements when it came to logistics. Without a professional groom and someone maintaining armour as well as weapons, a knight was useless.

Leylin looked at the warhorse behind her sympathetically. As expected, it was already looking dispirited and showed signs of malnutrition.

‘It’s already strange that a noble lady is training to be a knight. She’s even travelling alone. How open is her family? Or is this perhaps one of those people who are escaping marriage?’

Being eyed by Leylin, Rafiniya lowered her head, slightly ashamed. She abruptly got onto her war horse, elegant and speedy, showing the results of bitter training, “Though there was a misunderstanding in our meeting, things thankfully ended well. May I know the way to the Mercenary Guild?”

“Head east, and you’ll find it quickly!” Leylin was speechless at this young girl, who looked like she’d been brainwashed by stories of knights.

“Thank you very much! Someday, under the guidance of fate, we’ll meet again!” She naturally urged her handsome horse forward, and the mount snorted as it darted away.

“But that’s the west. You’re going in the wrong direction...” Leylin watched the direction in which she had left, but she had already disappeared.

“High-ranked knights who are directionally challenged are really quite rare. She didn’t prepare much and is adventuring. Hopefully, she won’t get attacked by ogres or gnomes and become jerky...” Leylin silently prayed for her and then returned to his inn.

For him, all that had happened today was merely a fun event in the long journey that was life. It was not worthy to ruminate over.

Chapter 858 - Employer

The gates opened, and a huge large group of merchants left Emon City. All sorts of flags flew, with over five middle-scale groups and tens of other small ones in the caravan. There were also too many independent merchants to count.

The group was like a museum for the races of the World of Gods. Humans, dwarves, gnomes, halflings, half-elves, and many other half-bloods mingled, leaving Leylin's mind blown.

There were a lot of Professionals amongst the mercenaries, but there wasn't a single leading commander so everything looked chaotic with all sorts of people mixed in. Leylin saw a few dwarves riding wild boars running past him while hiccuping. He was rendered speechless.

'There are even more races than the types of pirates I'm in charge of... The Professionals are all a mess...' These mercenaries allowed Leylin to have a better understand of the Professions in the World of Gods.

From the most common warriors, thieves, squires, and assassins to the higher-grade knights, gunmen and archers, Leylin could also see some low-ranked bloodline holders as well as druids. They were attached to those large mercenary groups and were employed by the medium-ranked merchant groups.

As for the weak group that Leylin was a part of, they were employed by a small merchant group with no other choice. With

their route interrupted, not being able to drop their goods off was one thing, but the terrifying fines of violating contracts was enough to render their families bankrupt.

In this world with deities, those protected by the gods could have their church dispatch priests and paladins to demand payment, and even the king would not dare renege on a debt. Waukeen loved doing this with her wealthy church, and of course the fee was very high.

Hence, under the threat of going bankrupt, these merchants had no choice but to force themselves onto a path blocked by ogres.

However, they were no fools. They issued a few large missions, and recruited enough mercenaries and helpers to form a huge caravan. This gave them enough strength to protect themselves.

However, Leylin had his doubts about the strength of these low-ranked Professionals. They were destined to be cannon fodder!

“Everyone of the Night Halls, I entrust the fates of me and my sister to you!” Before they left, their employers had come to see them personally. It was a pair of noblewomen who seemed like sisters.

“Haha... Don’t worry, hic ... With Old Pam around, those darned ogres will die as they come!” The leader of this little group, at least in name, made his promise while patting his chest. This hiccuping dwarf with a red brandy nose was called Pam. He was a rare gunslinger, though the butt of the gun at his waist was already

filled with rust. Leylin felt like the firearm was just scrap metal at this point, only useful as a hammer in close combat.

Leylin hadn't even remembered all his 'teammates' here yet.

'Besides that inferior dwarf gunman Pam, there's a halfling thief, a human archer and me, a warrior. This is really the worst of the worst. We only met yesterday through the attendant at the Mercenary Guild... These sisters were obviously made a fool of by that attendant...'

Leylin never expected for there to be fraud organisations like this in the World of Gods, established temporarily to trick customers. Still, he had no intentions of changing anything.

'Though they tried to swindle people, the bit of commission you paid got you a rank 10 wizard. You've really made a huge profit!' he thought inside.

At this moment, the noble lady in the horse carriage sighed, knowing that she had dug a hole for herself.

"Everyone..." The hanging curtain in the carriage was pulled to reveal the corner of a beautiful face. She looked to be about 25 or 26, more mature than most young women. However, one could see sorrow from her furrowed brows, as if she had some doubts.

"In order to ensure the safety on this trip, I've especially invited an adventurer! She is a high-ranked knight, and I'm sure she'll get

along well with everyone!” The noblewoman looked apologetic, but the person who paid money was the leader here. Pam, knowing how much weight the Night Halls carried, only mumbled a little but agreed.

“A new adventurer? And a high-ranked knight at that. It’s... her?” Leylin suddenly had a bad feeling.

“Sorry that I’m late, Sister Hera!” A black warhorse streaked through the gates of the city like lightning, and the tender voice of a female could be heard from the knight on her mount.

“Rafiniya!” Hera, who was inside the horse carriage, revealed a tender smile that caused Old Pam and the rest to look dazed.

The knight quickly arrived at the carriage and flipped over to get off the horse, revealing a face that Leylin was exceptionally familiar with.

“Sister Hera!” Rafiniya first pulled at Hera’s hand enthusiastically, and then looked at the mercenaries nearby.

“Hello, everyone! I’m Rafiniya, and we’re going to adventure together— huh...”

Halfway through introducing herself, Rafiniya abruptly stopped, eyes widening. “Ley, you bastard, you actually cheated me!”

The tender voice of a young girl, as well as her appearance, made

it easy for people to have misconceptions. The dwarf Pam discreetly gave Leylin a look of approval, while the human archer seemed envious.

“I didn’t, you’re just a person with a poor sense of direction!” Leylin touched his nose and rolled his eyes, not feeling like speaking to this girl who was directionally challenged.

“Who did you say has a poor sense of direction?” Rafiniya was immediately like a kitten who’d had her tail stepped on. She burst out in anger.

“Do you know each other? That’s even better! Come here, Rafiniya. Tell me about what happened yesterday...” Hera came to mediate, and it was evident that she was very tactful.

“But...” Leylin focused on Hera’s hands. They were rough, and there even calluses at the side. They were much like the hands of the maids in Leylin’s manor, and her clothes were rather simple. The edges were slightly whitened. It was obvious that she did not have a good family background, but had employed Leylin and the others in the name of a noble.

‘A noble born of a commoner? Or does she have a more troublesome identity? Did she get Rafiniya because she seemed to have a great status? She’s quite shrewd...’ Leylin watched Rafiniya enter the carriage, and the sounds of laughter could be heard once in a while. He shook his head inside.

He did not discriminate against Hera. All methods were valid

when one's survival was at stake. As long as it didn't affect him, he wouldn't bother unveiling her plot.

“Tsk! Ley, look at that warhorse! It's even taller than the two of us. I'll bet you that this horse has a value of at least 200 Gold kronas!”

Old Pam was now demoted to a horsekeeper and was gloomy. He temporarily took care of Rafiniya's horse on her behalf. The sight of a dwarf leading a tall horse was rather amusing, though the man himself did not realise this. His hands kept caressing the black horse while muttering, “A pity... What a pity... Look at how she's abused this good horse! This colour of the coat and the abrasions would make those horse peddlers reduce their prices...”

“Please, she's a lady of a noble family and didn't even bring a horsekeeper when she came out. It's already good enough that she didn't starve it to death...” Leylin laughed as he patted Pam's shoulders, which gained the man's approval.

“Mm, mm,” Pam kept nodding, “I'm not bragging, but my father's father was once a horsekeeper for the city owner. He was able to raise even the best warhorses with heavenly bloodlines till they were plump and healthy...”

“That doesn't seem right...” Leylin was speechless as he shook his head. Dwarves usually liked to brag, not to mention those that had taken alcohol.

At this moment, a gold krona was thrown from the window and

hit Pam's head.

“Take care of this horse and it's yours!” Golden rays shone in Pam's eyes, and he didn't even get mad, “No problem at all! Old Pam will help you take care of this treasure, esteemed lady!”

‘Inexperienced.’ This was Leylin's evaluation of Rafiniya. There had been many eyes fixed on her horse, and after seeing the gold krona she had casually tossed away, those gazes turned to greed and malice.

Even the halfling thief and the human archers had changed expressions now, they were up to no good.

They were all mercenaries who'd banded together for now. Why would they trust each other? On dangerous roads, they could easily become robbers and bandits.

‘Even if Rafiniya's a rank 10 knight, she won't be able to evade the plots against her.’ Leylin could practically predict the fates of these three noble ladies.

‘Ogres are the best cover. As long as someone's careful, they can push the blame to the devils. After all, would they actually contend with those ogres?’ Leylin took a look at his surroundings. The merchant groups had mostly gathered, though the people in charge of a few medium-sized groups had no intentions of leaving, as if waiting for some important people.

‘Could they have banded together and recruited a high-ranked Professional?’ Just as Leylin was wondering, an elite team appeared from Emon City. The leader was a middle-aged man wearing shining armour, a resolute expression on his face. Under his thick eyebrows were a pair of radiant eyes.

Behind him, a pale eagle flag fluttered in the wind.

Chapter 859 - Ashen Hawks

“It’s Lord Siegfried of the Ashen Hawks!”

“With him around, Old Pam’s at ease now!” The dwarf Pam exclaimed excitedly.

‘Powerful’ was Leylin’s first impression of the man. Siegfried was at or above rank 15, and there were even energy traces from magic items on his person. That wasn’t all; the members behind him were the cream of the crop as well, and Leylin even spotted a wizard among them.

While she was clad in black wizard robes, that unique spiritual temperament could not deceive Leylin. However, she did not seem to have a high rank and had only made contact with the third level of the Weave.

Seeing the mercenary group of the Ashen Hawks meet with the medium-scaled merchant groups, as well as the subsequent signal they set off, Leylin asked by Pam’s side, Is that Siegfried very powerful?”

“But of course. Lord Siegfried is the only mithril mercenary in Emon City! Mithril, you know? On top of that, he’s a high-ranked warrior who’s gone through numerous battles. Our city hall even invited him to take charge of the garrison, but he rejected them...” At the very mention of Siegfried, Old Pam talked non-stop, as if he himself was a member of the Ashen Hawks.

The Hawks had a huge reputation, and it resulted in an uproar amongst the large merchant groups. Be it the mercenaries or merchants, all of them had delighted looks on their face, as if just having them around meant their safety was guaranteed.

‘Yet another bunch of tragic people who place their safety in the hands of others...’ Seeing this, Leylin sighed inside, ‘No matter how powerful he is, he’ll definitely be protecting the few medium-sized merchant groups that hired him first and foremost. How could he stay by your side like Pam would? There are over a hundred ogres...’

While some were still immersed in their fantasies, the mixed bag of people set off.

‘How boring...’ Leylin was now dressed like a fighter, armoured in moderately new leather. At his waist was a longsword made of steel, the grip wound with coarse rope that allowed him to unsheath it smoothly at any time.

The large caravan moved very slowly. Apart from the leadership problems, food, water, and camping at night were huge issues for them. Even proper legions couldn’t manage such a thing well, forget this ragtag group. Sometimes they didn’t even make it past a few kilometres a day.

Leylin had already expected this, and he stayed in his group while at ease. With so many people present, he would only be used as cannon fodder to bait the ogres out if they ended up meeting. That would allow him to escape successfully.

He'd already made up his mind. Once he passed the danger of the ogres, he'd immediately leave this large group and proceed on his own. As for the matter of the commission and trust, would he even care?

Leylin thus had nothing going on for now. He'd made a deal with a merchant for one silver, and was allowed on one of the carriages. Besides his requisite patrolling duties, the only things he did were resting, meditation, and secret research.

‘A.I. Chip, show me my current stats!’ Leylin commanded.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 16. Race: Human, Rank 10 Wizard. Strength: 5.2. Agility: 6.5. Vitality: 6.3. Spirit: 10. Status: Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite. Spell Slots: Rank 4(3), Rank 3(5), Rank 2(7), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)] [Analysis of the Weave: Level 0 100%, Level 1 100%, Level 2 37.31%, Level 3 16.78%, Level 4 2.01%.]

The A.I. Chip loyally carried out his orders.

‘My spiritual force is greatly disproportionate to the time I’ve spent meditating. With the reduced effect of the Devilblood Dagger, I can’t advance so easily anymore. I can only try to raise my other stats to 10 points...’

In Leylin's view, raising of his other stats was a process of perfecting his own genes. Once they all broke past a certain limit, they could give him a pleasant surprise.

Leylin took a quick look at his stats and shifted his attention to the Weave's analysis, his most important work.

'Slow as ever...' Leylin could do nothing about this. The Weave was under Mystra's control, and she was a powerful goddess. The A.I. Chip analysing the Weave already went against the will of the gods. He couldn't do much without alerting her.

'The speed's decreased after it started on level 2. It would be unnoticeable if not for my increase in rank... Perhaps I should use another method...' Just as Leylin was pondering over what he should do, an unwelcome guest opened the door of the truck.

"Sister Hera has already explained everything to me. I'm sorry!" Just from the voice, Leylin could tell that this was Rafiniya and he opened his eyes. Even in the darkness of the truck, he could see her flushed face.

"I accept your apology. Are we done now?" Leylin gestured for her to leave.

"How can you do this?" Rafiniya's embarrassed face reddened further, but this time in fury, "I'm here to apologise to you, yet you're acting so rudely? Besides... Pam and the others are..."

“I’ve done my tasks for the day. Pam and the others are just unwilling to put in the effort... Also...” Leylin stood up. Just the natural elegance in his movements caused the knight to shrink backwards in retreat, as if she’d her own father in his fury.

“Also... who is it that keeps staying in the employer’s carriage? And who keeps evading patrol duty?” Leylin’s eyes rested on Rafiniya, causing the knight to lower her head. At this moment, she realised that this Leylin indeed was doing his duty unlike her.

“That– That’s different! I’m a girl!” Rafiniya stomped her foot, “Who knew travelling was so tedious? There’s grime everywhere, and nowhere to even walk on. It’s even harder to find a washroom...”

Her subconscious thoughts were poured out in front of Leylin. Noticing his half-smile, she couldn’t help but go beet red and lower her head.

“So now you know the hardships of travelling? Don’t be fooled by the glamour of heroes on the surface. In truth, they could be suffering more than you... Go home, little lady!” Leylin rarely showed kindness such as this. He only did it because all it required was for him to speak a bit.

“You sound like you know a lot, but do you really?” Rafiniya turned and left, as if she had gotten used to and annoyed by these lectures. Leylin only sighed, “Rebellious children...”

The days passed, and the ragtag group got closer to the region

rumoured to have ogres around. They hadn't met trouble before this, their numbers enough to scare off vagrants and those with malicious intent. Within the group however, the bandit Professionals had bad luck. No matter where they went, they were watched vigilantly.

When it came time to camp, they did it on a flat field. Numerous mercenaries constructed lofty tents and lit bonfires. Hot water was then poured into pots; with the addition of their rations, some wild vegetables that a few older mercenaries found outside the camp, and jerky, it was cooked into a savoury stew.

Pam hugged his rum bottle while salivating at the pot, occasionally taking a drink.

"Everyone's worked hard today!" Hera and Rafiniya got off the horse carriage, and the mercenaries of the Night Halls sat around the bonfire.

After spending some time together, Leylin now had another opinion regarding Hera. While she was a slight schemer, it was because of her living conditions. She did not regard herself to be much better than those mercenaries who were working hard.

With his experience, Leylin could naturally tell if she was sincere or putting on a front. Her younger sister seemed to be called Yalani, and was protected well by her sister. She spent most of her time on the carriage, and even Leylin had only seen her a few times before. That meant Hera was aware of the dangers outside.

After Hera brought the dinner that had just been made back to the carriage, Old Pam impatiently drank his rum and began to chatter on.

However, in the long chilly night, there was little to while the time away. Hence, the other members approved of it tacitly. Rafiniya especially seemed to have fun, and probably even took Old Pam's stories to be true.

"Hello. May I know if this is Lady Hera's carriage?" At this moment, a person in charge of one of the merchant groups walked over.

"What is it? Please tell me!" Rafiniya blocked the way. Days before, there were a few guys who were lusting over the beauty of the sisters. She'd kicked them out, but she was now on her huard.

The person in charge who had been rejected frowned, but then put on a smile, "Well, we're reaching the dangerous regions where the ogres appear. Lord Siegfried told me to come inform everyone to remain vigilant at night. Remember to send people to patrol the area..."

Chapter 860 - Lorent

Once they sent the man away, the mercenaries all had imposing expressions on their faces. Only Rafiniya was cheerful as she took out her sword with an eager look on her face, “We finally get to fight?”

This expression of hers immediately attracted displeasure from her comrades. “In that case, you can be the first to go on patrol tonight!” Leylin unceremoniously dealt her a blow, damping her energy. Old Pam didn’t dare to say anything, but he secretly gave Leylin a big thumbs up.

Seeing Rafiniya huffing angrily and ducking back into the carriage, Leylin and the others smiled in a carefree manner. Only, Leylin’s smile was rather dark as he turned back to look at where Rafiniya had gone to.

‘This... It feels like something might have happened...’

.....

At the moment, another special group entered Emon City. Their leader was a paladin in bright silver armour, the piercing light of which caused the city guards at the gate to inch away from them. Their faces were filled with reverence and awe as they looked at the divine light on the paladin’s chest.

“Our intel says that they vanished without a trace once they went ashore.” His badge was based on a blue shield, with a warhammer

balanced on top of a scale as the insignia. A holy light lingered about it.

“A paladin of the God of Justice!” Someone would call out in a low voice from time to time, and the street thugs and hooligans all completely disappeared without a trace.

The divine light that this paladin possessed was of course that of the God of Judgment, Tyr. That god possessed powerful divine force and was committed to his cause of fighting against evil. The zealous paladins under his command were the greatest nightmare of all evil organisations.

“Leylin Faulen... This insignificant little noble must be in cahoots with that earlier Pirates’ Tide. He can’t run from us!” The paladin had a resolute expression on his face, “Under the divine glory of our lord, all evil must be punished!”

“Paladin Lorent! Do not forget the teachings of our God. Without a trial, that person still has the status of an aristocrat, so please watch your words and manners!” An old priest warned from behind the paladin.

The God of Justice’s priests were serious about punishing evil as well, but unlike the radical paladins they knew that the world wasn’t black and white. They had learnt to compromise, which was the only reason that Tyr’s church had survived to this point. This priest’s eyes were filled with sorrow, but they were soon flooded with determination.

“Only... The lives of thousands of civilians on the outer seas, as well as the disappearance of tens of thousands of innocents must be answered for. He must cooperate with our investigation. The God of Justice will never let an evil man off, and neither will he misjudge an innocent person!”

“Praise the Lord!” Several high-ranking members of the church began to pray from behind the priest.

This was an investigation team that’d been sent by Tyr to the outer seas of the Dambrath Kingdom. There were several high-ranking paladins and priests in their numbers, and once they reached the outer seas they were shocked by the atrocities committed by those evil pirates.

When the Pirates’ Tide spread its sails, it almost destroyed the entire Baltic archipelago. Only a few small noble fiefs managed to escape the purge unharmed. Since the pirates took no prisoners and left none alive, it had been very difficult to gather evidence.

After passing through many obstacles, just when they had finally almost pinned their culprit as the Pirate Cove and Scarlet Tiger pirate crew, they discovered a small noble family who seemed to have played a very important role.

The unstoppable investigation team immediately arrived at Faulen Island, only to be told the news that Leylin had long since left.

In desperation, the investigation team could only divide into two

groups and continue to investigate the outer seas. They proclaimed the doctrine of the God of Justice, and the group immediately went back to the continent to apparently request Leylin to cooperate with their investigation.

In reality, once they were within the grasp of these paladins, even the most cunning of nobles could not live for more than a day! The priests of Tyr did not lack in divine torture spells that could force their target to surrender. Sometimes, even a simple ‘Detect Alignment’ was able to solve many problems.

In the presence of powerful gods, the minor nobles who were caught with evidence did not have any power to resist. In turn, if there was no evidence, even high-ranking bishops could not directly put a noble on trial.

Leylin had long broken off the relationship between Faulen Island and the Scarlet Tigers, so unless they could catch him the investigation team could not take any measures against Baron Jonas and their fief. He’d taken care of this before deciding to travel abroad.

“Damn... These nobles ignore the suffering of so many civilians, and instigate one disaster after the other...” A female priest said resentfully.

“Be cautious!” Although the paladin thought the same thing, on the surface he still restrained his female companion’s actions.

The spread of faith in the prime material plane did not curb the

power of secular loyalty. It caused the churches a lot of frustration.

“We cannot completely cleanse the world of all its filth, but we can continue to judge every sin we see. Ultimately the world will be purified” The paladin Lorent said strongly, “Raphael, notify the town hall that we need their help, as well as those left behind...”

After several days, Lorent and his party were able to find several of Leylin’s suspected identities.

“This one can also be ruled out!” Within a splendid and opulent mansion, many guards were left sprawled in confusion on the ground, including several strong Professionals. The paladin Lorent regretfully put down a pale-faced young noble who was trembling all over in fear.

“However, he has also committed numerous crimes. He’s promoted imprisonment, murder, corruption, and countless other things. Hand him over and have the town hall dispose of him!” The female priest, Raphael, glared with disgust at the trembling young noble, as if she had seen a maggot. Allowing this maggot to continue living was almost like an insult to her god.

Although she dearly wanted to directly kill the noble, she managed to endure it.

“Those mercenaries are so mobile that it is very difficult to distinguish between them in such a short period of time even with our capabilities. However, the larger merchant groups in recent times are very suspicious!”

“I was thinking the same thing.” Lorent turned and left, leaving behind a scene of disorder, “We have already tarried here for far too long, we must speed up...”

After a short while, the newly gathered investigation group strolled out of the gate of Emon City. The rest of the city officials and nobles watched them from far away as they breathed a sigh of relief, wry smiles on their faces.

The investigation group left, but they’d swept up a lord, two nights, and an extremely unlucky noble by pure coincidence during their stay. Even the various gangs had been exterminated. Emon City had been cleansed, and was now much more safe. However, they had left behind a huge mess.

.....

‘Is this feeling of being chased because of that investigation group from the God of Justice? Looking at the time, they should have arrived at Emon City by now...’ His keen perception and meticulous way of thinking let Leylin guess the truth in just a moment.

‘Tyr... Haha, in the eyes of many nobles, this powerful god is not at all inferior to the God of Plague...’ Leylin laughed coldly to himself, ‘However, if I do not become a high-ranking wizard and build a wizard’s tower, I fear I won’t be able to return to Faulen Island.’

The situation was more dire this time. If Leylin's father was like the Marquis, or even a noble of the kingdom, he wouldn't be suppressed like this. However, the Faulen Family pitifully didn't have such a background. As a result, were they to be caught by the investigative team it would spell disaster for them. The paladins of the God of Justice were not harmless vegetarians.

Naturally, even the God of Justice's most resolute paladins had to learn to compromise, and once Leylin displayed his greater power and strength, showing that their reward was not worth the efforts, it would not be impossible to erase this matter.

'No! I just need to let Dambrath Kingdom's officials handle it, then this entire matter will not concern me,' Leylin's eyes shone brightly, 'Even the God of Justice's priests need to pay attention to evidence. It looks there are still many more things for me to do in the kingdom...'

Of course all of this was based on the fact that Leylin would remain a noble wizard, and his crimes wouldn't be exposed. If he was thought of as an invader from another world, or a believer in devils, then he would be endlessly pursued by all the gods, and all the kingdoms on the continent would unite against him.

'Interesting, it really is interesting!' Leylin's original plan was to leave Faulen Island to train after his work there had been completed, rapidly advancing in rank until he became a god, and finally linking up with his original body.

He was still following that plan, and the Faulen Family was developing rapidly. Although the investigative group was

troublesome, he could still resolve that issue.

“Be careful! The footprints of an ogre have been discovered ahead!” At this moment, news came from the carriage in front of them, stirring up the entire merchant group.

After they had entered the region, Leylin could not continue to hide and be lazy. He had to fulfill his duty as a mercenary, accompanying his employer's carriage to protect it. Through the carriage's gauzy curtain, he could see two similarly frightened pretty faces.

Chapter 861 - Ogre

“It’s alright, the mercenaries will protect us!” Hera kissed her sister’s forehead, which helped Yalani calm down.

“I’ll go and take a look!” Rafaniya had already gotten off the carriage and put on her knight’s armour and steel gloves. The warhorse she sat on let out a snarl, rushing to the front of the group.

The horse had showered Pam’s head and face with dust, and he hadn’t managed to dodge in time. Even his beard had been filled with pebbles, the comedic performance causing the girls in the carriage to laugh quietly. Hera’s stern eyes seemed to have softened.

“These little bitches are really... Phooey...” Old Pam spat out the sand in his mouth, his hand going to his gun case. He’d polished most of the rust off, and it now smelt of gunpowder. Leylin still believed that it wouldn’t be as useful as a hammer in melee, though.

Leylin was sceptical as to whether this dwarf, who had not even reached rank 5, was brave enough to fight against a high-ranking knight with his life. Although dirtying their beard was a very serious insult for some dwarves, Old Pam seemed to have assimilated into human society, and become crafty and sly.

Or perhaps it could be said that after working with humans extensively, he had learnt to be cowardly and picked up a few bad

habits. Naturally, the dwarf would perhaps not agree with this assessment.

Leylin could not detect the slightest trace of a dwarf's stubborn and tenacious temper from Old Pam. When Rafaniya flew back like the wind, he was already eagerly leading her warhorse along for her and even received a silver krona as a tip.

It must be said that Old Pam could indeed look after warhorses well. Over the past few days, Rafaniya's originally malnourished mount now looked very energetic. The noblewoman had already expressed the desire to hire the dwarf as her personal horsekeeper, and Old Pam looked rather satisfied with this arrangement.

"What's happening up ahead?" Leylin did not particularly care about Old Pam's future career, and immediately asked about the state of affairs in front of them.

"A few scouts and thieves have reported that they've discovered the footprints of an ogre. The imprints are fairly fresh, and it looks like it was just half an hourglass ago. We should be ready to get into a fight at any time..."

After hearing Rafaniya's statement, all the mercenaries immediately grew nervous. The halfling thief and the human archer couldn't help but grip their weapons more tightly.

Pam involuntarily began to inch closer to Rafaniya's side. On the whole, this young lady was the most powerful deterrence in their entire group. Since danger had befallen them, she could adapt the

fastest and had the highest chance of escaping.

“Well, Rafiniya, you will protect me, won’t you?” Old Pam looked at Rafiniya hopefully.

“Are you not a mercenary?” The young lady had always been completely disdainful towards soft-boned cowards like him.

“Heavens... Do it for Nick’s sake, you can’t treat your horsekeeper like this. Pitiful Old Pam will be torn to pieces by the ogre, and who would look after your Nick then?” Old Pam’s tears were about to overflow from his eyes, and he clung to Rafiniya’s legs with all his might.

Nick was the name that Old Pam had given to Rafiniya’s warhorse in passing.

“Very well, very well! It’s a knight’s duty to protect the weak!” Rafiniya was rather scared of the expression on his face.

“Oh! I admire you, great knight...” Pam immediately started to babble without stopping.

“However, your pay as my horsekeeper will be cut in half!” Rafiniya had learnt a lot after travelling with them, and could even haggle over prices now.

“Out of the question, the most is 10%!”

“40%! You think I can’t find any other horsekeepers? My family has a dozen!”

“30%! You can’t lower it by any more, otherwise Old Pam can’t even afford to drink watered-down rum!”

“Deal!” The lady knight was still rather young and inexperienced when all was said and done. She had retreated in defeat under the dwarf’s pitiful tactics, and Leylin could not help but find it funny.

Just at this moment, a dismal cry came from the front. “Ogre! The ogre is here!”

“Stay alert!” “Stand guard!” Leylin took out his steel sword in a flash, his vigilant eyes attentively watching the uproar in front of him.

Aside from the cacophony of human voices, the sounds of strange roars and clashing weapons now sounded out.

“The ogres have really appeared!” The halfling in the squad immediately took out his dagger and hid in the shadowy corners of the carriage. The human archer climbed on top of the carriage to find somewhere suitable for himself, and his wooden bow that he usually carried on his back was now grasped in his hand.

“Ogres? I’ve been waiting for you for a long time!” Rafiniya excitedly got up and reined in her horse, immediately changing

direction.

“Wait, I’ll come with you!” She heard a man’s voice come from behind her and her eyes widened in response. “When did you come?”

No one knew when Leylin had mounted the warhorse and sat behind Rafiniya. To this high-ranked knight, this was completely unimaginable.

A knight and her horse were meant to be one entity, and being approached like this without even noticing was very dangerous if the man had malicious intent. Rafiniya’s heart turned icy, and the attitude of the man seated behind her back made it difficult for her to bear.

“Perhaps you should be a thief instead! Get down immediately, Nick won’t like this at all!” At this point, the closeness of their bodies was rather strange, and Rafiniya began to lightly blush in response.

“Be a good girl, let’s go!”

“I’m not a child!” Rafiniya protested weakly, but Nick bolted out like a black whirlwind beneath them.

At this moment, Rafiniya revealed her superb horsemanship. Even in the situation where she had someone riding behind her back, she passed through the chaotic troops and obstacles to make

her way to the front of the caravan.

Many carriages were in retreat, and several mercenary groups were already brandishing their swords and bows in a semicircle.

Standing across the defensive troops were a group of enormous monsters, with fewer than 20 amongst their numbers.

“Are these ogres? This is the first time I’m seeing them!” Rafiniya curiously peered at the monsters in front of them.

The very first ogre was nearly 3 metres tall, with the torso of a man. It looked like an obese fatty, with dark-grey skin, a thick neck, greasy matted hair and vile sarcomas all over its body. There was a wide and flat nose under its beast-like eyes and it had exposed its jutting black teeth, making it look as malevolent as a devil.

The one standing at the very front was the chief of this group of ogres. It wore simple tanned animal skin around its waist. The other ogres were completely in the nude, everything flopping about.

“It smells awful!” Just over a dozen metres away, a putrid stench directly assaulted her nostrils, making Rafiniya involuntarily cover her nose.

“Not bad! It looks very similar to the image in the illustrated handbook of ogres, only we haven’t seen its different variations

such as the two-headed ogre and the ogre shaman...” Leylin now sized up the ogres opposite him, his blue eyes shining brightly for reasons that an ordinary person would find difficult to accept.

‘A.I. Chip, scan the ogre’s stats!’

[Beep! Initiating mission, beginning scan... Data is being collected, generating graphics!]

The A.I. Chip loyally executed Leylin’s command.

In a short space of time, a hologram of an ogre was projected before Leylin, along with detailed information about its stats.

[Name: Unknown, Race: Ogre, Gender: Male, Strength: 7, Agility: 3, Vitality: 10, Spirit: 1. Feats: Regeneration: Ogres possess extraordinary regenerative abilities, and can survive for a very long period of time even if they have their heads cut off. 2. Armour Skin: The grease on an ogre’s skin mixes with dirt to become a separate layer of natural defense, its effects are comparable to normal leather armour, with no resistance to magic.]

‘These stats are comparable to an average rank 7 or rank 8 fighter, and it’s only an ordinary ogre...’

‘In addition, these ogres have powerful constitutions, and terrifying regenerative capabilities. The cells in their body must be much more active than in ordinary people, and if the Devilblood Dagger can absorb it, then perhaps it could raise my vitality by 2 or 3 points, reaching the 10 point bottleneck!’ Leylin was now looking at these ogres like they were an enormous treasure chest.

Even by the most conservative estimates, this ogre tribe could raise his vitality by 1 or 2 points; it was equivalent to being blessed by the grace of a low-ranking god.

However, Leylin simply did not dare to provoke such a huge group of ogres by himself. He even needed to rely on the others for protection before he was certain he could pass through this region safely.

However, the large caravan group was currently pit against the ogres, and Leylin saw his chance.

“It’s just a scattered group of ogres, no need to worry!” At this moment, members of the Ashen Hawks rushed over, led by the impressive high-ranking fighter Siegfried who Leylin had previously met.

Seeing that there were fewer than 20 ogres against them, Siegfried’s expression relaxed.

“There aren’t any shamans. There’s few enough that the other mercenaries and carriages can gain experience from it. It won’t be

as frightening in our next encounter then...” Siegfried was fully aware that if the strengths of their large caravan group could be united, then it would not be a problem at all for them to pass through this region.

However, humans were often knocked down by their fear of the unknown, especially when these ogres had such a frightening reputation in the rumours. It made it much easier to trigger collective panic, and that would be even more devastating to them than a tsunami!

As a result, it was very important to let these cowardly merchants know about these ogres in advance.

Chapter 862 - First Fight

“The Ashen Hawks will keep everything under control in the rear. The rest of you, advance!” Siegfried reined in his horse and allowed his members to form a defensive line behind him.

“The reward for beheading them and the contributions and monetary reward from the mercenary guild will all be yours!” Siegfried was deeply aware of the weak points of humanity, and was shrewd and ruthless enough to immediately throw out more bait to entice the others.

Several medium sized mercenary groups immediately began to desire it, but before they could discuss their decision more, the ogres across from them could not wait any longer.

“Ow ow!” The ogre who stood at the very front threw its ferocious mouth wide open like a beast and let out a terrifying roar, the unknown animal bone it gripped in its hand becoming a huge club that swept across like a fierce gale.

Bang! The bone club pounded at the shields of the Shield Fighters at the very front, and a dull sound could be heard. Several mercenaries immediately collapsed, their arms snapping loudly.

The general strength of an ogre was around 5 or 7 points, equal to the strength of an elite rank 5 fighter. It was something that ordinary mercenaries simply could not contend against.

As if responding to their chieftain’s roar, the ogres behind him

brandished their enormous clubs and hammers, or even raised their bare fists to throw themselves at the mercenaries. Several medium sized mercenary groups had their frontlines collapse immediately, and their leaders shouted commands to no avail. Everyone could tell that Siegfried's expression grew dark.

‘The data and attributes of this world do not exactly follow the superposition principle. The sum of two actions does not necessarily equal the effect of each of the actions performed alone...’ Leylin watched the scene, but began to ponder other matters.

After experiencing so much in the World of Gods, he finally realised that the attribute data was different in this world.

‘Although ordinary people have an average level of 1, it seems more difficult to advance further on. Even breaking through the bottleneck of 1 for all my stats was very difficult in the beginning, and I spent quite a lot of effort to do so. After raising my stats to 5, every time I raised my stats by 1 level, it became several times more difficult to do so again. After I reach 10 points, the disparity will become even more obvious...’

Leylin had a premonition that after his average attributes reached 10 points, every time it was raised by 1 would perhaps be equivalent to the sum effects of his previous advancements. His overall strength would increase and he would grow considerably. This sort of exponential increase was different to what he was used to.

Whooosh! A strong gale blew across the region, and Leylin

subconsciously noticed a shattered armour fragment on the floor, with mottle bloodstains all over it. This shifted his attention directly to the battlefield.

“Kill those dark-skinned bastards!” A medium sized mercenary group’s leader bellowed, radiating a tremendous force of qi.

These ogres were few in number, and did not even have a tenth of a medium sized mercenary group’s number. After the medium-ranked Professionals went to stall the ogres, the superiority in numbers became clear.

“Ha! Kill!”

Ten low-ranked mercenaries grasped their pikes and grouped together in a simple formation, tightly trapping an ogre in their circle. Even these simple group attacks could not be deciphered by the ogre’s brains, and along with the captain’s command, ten pikes stabbed through one like vipers.

“Ow ow...” The ogre raged, and although it had caught the head of two pikes, many more pikes pierced through its body. Great quantities of fresh blood flowed forth, and the ogre struggled continuously but was firmly trapped by the prison of steel pikes.

The alliance of ten low-ranking Professionals had the power to seriously hurt an ogre. The pikes used by these mercenaries seemed to have been remodelled, with the spearhead containing bloody grooves and barbs. Once one pierced a target, it would undoubtedly spread the wound and cause a hemorrhage.

Blood spurted out like a torrential fountain, and although ogres were proud of their shocking regenerative ability, it could not save the life of this one.

The ogre's roars grew fainter, and the light in its eyes also began to dim. Its enormous corpse finally thudded onto the floor, mixing fresh blood with dirt to form a strange mottled pattern.

“Ow ow! Ow ow!” No matter how stupid a brain the ogre chieftain had, watching many of its clansmen being surrounded and cut down made it begin to roar, shattering the arm of an unlucky mercenary in its hands.

The sound of its cry had changed from its earlier frenzied state, and seemed very curt. The other ogres who heard the sound began to fall back, and some even turned their backs and paid the price of being struck by the mercenaries to flee the battlefield.

“Hey! Don't even think of running away, cowards!” At this moment, Leylin felt the black warhorse beneath him immediately gallop off, advancing towards the ogre chieftain.

The other mercenaries were astonished when they saw a black warhorse carrying a slender knight, directly leaping over the crowd to arrive at the frontline. There was even a fighter seated behind her who seemed like he did not know whether to laugh or to cry.

Knight Battle Skill— Charge! Knight Battle Skill— Braveheart

Knight Battle Skill– Sharp Qi!

A powerful glowing flame burst out from Rafiniya's lance, and many mercenaries cried out "High-ranked knight!" in astonishment. The warhorse had been reinforced by many battle skills began to gallop even faster, and overtook the ogre chieftain in a flash.

"Ha!" Rafiniya thrust her lance with great force, and as it had been reinforced by Sharp Qi it immediately shattered the ogre chieftain's defences. The lance pierced through its chest and exited through its back, and sblood suddenly began to rain down.

As a rank 10 knight with a noble steed, armour and a lance, if Rafiniya could not take down an ogre who was merely equivalent to a rank 7 or rank 8 fighter her master would probably throw himself into a lake.

"Good! Who is that?" Siegfried had watched the battle from the side, and his eyes landed on the high ranking knight. This was a powerful Professional, and it often represented a good background. Not everyone could afford to raise a master knight.

"They're not from the medium-sized mercenary groups, perhaps they're wandering mercenaries!" A wizard clad entirely in black robes replied from his side, her eyes flashing.

"A wandering mercenary? It looks like there's still a lot of talent at the bottom of the barrel. Send some men over to speak to them!" Siegfried stroked his chin, feeling rather curious about the knight's

identity. At this point, the wizard nodded indifferently.

“Haha... So the rumoured ogres are only at this level?” Rafiniya strung up the ogre chieftain’s corpse on a pole, a playful voice coming from within her armour. Leylin could tell that there was some uneasiness hidden in her slightly shaky voice.

“Hey hey... Shouldn’t you let me down first?”

“Ah! How are you still here?” As expected, Rafiniya had already forgotten all about Leylin during her earlier charge, and only recalled that there was still someone seated behind her now.

At the same time, Leylin heard her mutter to herself, “Awful, how awful, it’s so dirty... I don’t want this lance anymore...”

.....

Although Rafiniya had intervened at the very end, the fight had spread towards the caravans, and after she had finally charged towards the ogre chieftain, the rest of the ogres ran even quicker. In the blink of an eye, they seemed to have disappeared into the dense shrubs by the road, which made the mercenaries who wanted the reward money feel crestfallen.

Rafiniya had won the credit, and seemed to be in a trance-like state. She did not even respond to the men sent over by the Ashen Hawks, and finally Leylin had to present himself and chat with them.

Only after returning to their own carriage did Rafiniya reap the reverent gazes of the others, and usually this little lass would have been so happy that if she had a tail, it would be rapidly wagging.

However, the girl seemed most preoccupied with throwing away her steel lance which was covered in the ogre's blood and stench. She went alone into the sisters' carriage, and a faint sound of retching was heard. Leylin reckoned that she still needed some time to adapt.

Old Pam once again had picked up scraps, and collected the lance that Rafiniya no longer wanted. He put it away carefully as if it was some treasured object.

After hearing that Rafiniya had abandoned the ogre's ears as she was afraid of how dirty it was, Old Pam threw a huge tantrum and stomped his feet. He even scolded Leylin loudly for being a wastrel.

The level of his greed made Leylin wonder if Old Pam descended from the blood of a hoarding dragon.

"Haha... If those ogres come again, Old Pam will let them taste the power of my gun... HURR..." Old Pam was gripping a bottle of rum in both hands, and belched from time to time, his face completely flushed with excitement.

After fighting the ogres, the entire merchant group began to continue on their journey. However, they had all calmed down and were no longer as afraid as they were before. After passing through

their first trial, they had realised that ogres were not up to their level. Although the ogres were very strong, they would still get injured and bleed, and they even took the head of the chieftain as a souvenir.

After the fear had passed, all of their thoughts grew lively again. Even Hera and her sister seemed to smile more.

‘Really...’ Leylin looked down at the scene and inwardly shook his head, a trace of suspicion in his eyes.

‘Why do I feel that there was something off about these bunch of ogres? It seemed like they were using... A plan against the soldiers? What a joke! Even if they had the mental capacity, how could they come up with that idea? Perhaps it was just a coincidence... No, the rumoured two-headed ogres or ogre shamans would perhaps have this sort of intelligence...’

‘If it’s true, then things will become interesting...’ Leylin’s lips curved into a meaningful smile.

Chapter 863 - Trap

The events proceeded according to Leylin's expectations. Several ogres came up to challenge them once in a while, from five or six to over a dozen at a time. Obviously unable to harm their large group, they would run away with their tails tucked between their legs, sometimes leaving numerous corpses behind.

Many mercenaries were terrified at the beginning, but as time went on, they would lie on their fronts on the carriage roofs and watch the pathetic ways the ogres fled while bursting out in laughter.

This relaxed attitude even infected the Ashen Hawks. Leylin found that besides Siegfried and that wizard, the other members seemed to overestimate their enemies.

"There are two more days till we get out of this region. It's the easiest mission Old Pam has ever done!" As the group proceeded, the dwarf, Pam, clung to his bottle of alcohol as if it was precious, and his brandy nose shone brilliantly.

"I never want to see those disgusting vermin again..." Rafiniya's resentment was obvious. Ever since the time she had tried to show off, she had not participated in the attacks on the ogres. It seemed that this little lady had been scared stupid by the painful experience.

Awoo... At this moment, the terrible cries of the ogres sounded ahead of the group. Old Pam contentedly hiccupped, not the least

bit affected by the sounds.

“Hic... again, again! The ones giving us money for free are back... I wonder who'll be lucky enough to get the ears of the ogres. The rewards are very good...”

“Things aren't going to be so easy...” Leylin unsheathed his own longsword, looking grim.

“What do you mean?” Pam had some suspicions, but his expression quickly changed. Continuous cries sounded from all directions, concealing a terrifying intent that even caused the warhorse Nick to neigh in distress.

“Damn it, there are so many of them!” Old Pam's bottle fell to the ground, creating a crunching sound. However, he had no time to feel sorry for his treasure, and instead immediately whipped out the firearm at his waist.

Tak tak! Tak tak! Ahead of the group now was pure chaos. Many merchants abandoned their goods and fled for their lives the way they'd come, creating an even larger uproar. There were many casualties among the mercenaries, and a huge number of tall figures could be seen in the distance.

“It's a trap! We've been surrounded!”

“Help! There are over 200 ogres!”

“Damn it, where are the Ashen Hawks? Where’s Siegfried? Could he have already died by the hands of the ogre shamans?” Many voices mixed together, and everyone next to Leylin instantly paled.

They were then drowned out in a chaotic stream of people, forced along with the crowd. Helpless as leaves in a typhoon, they had to flee for their lives.

“Sister Hera!” Rafiniya yelled, jumping onto the horse carriage and taking over the job of the horsekeeper who had disappeared, holding tightly onto the reins. The halfling thief looked like he wanted to help but was incapable enough to, and disappeared into the masses.

As for the human archer? That fellow had gotten onto Rafiniya’s precious horse, Nick, and galloped off quickly when the chaos had started. Rafiniya had needed to control the horse carriage and had no time to care about this, which allowed the archer to successfully steal the horse.

Wails and shrieks could be heard again and again, and the roars and cries from the ogres behind them were the strongest catalysts. The entire large caravan group completely fell apart.

The crowd pushed and squeezed their way through. In order to get on their way, they did not mind pointing their weapons at their own people.

With such a huge confusion, Leylin quickly disappeared along with the carriage. Of course, this was his intention.

‘So this actually was a trap! Though it’s just a [pocket formation](#), I didn’t expect that that these ogres were so intelligent... I really can’t look down on them anymore.’

Military tactic, enemies lured into narrow enclosed ‘pocket’ area, their entrance/exit is surrounded by soldiers to seal up the ‘pocket’, isolating the enemy.

At the moment, the cumbersome horse carriage was like a broken sailboat in a tsunami, on the verge of being destroyed at any moment. The dwarf Pam from before had already disappeared. Based on his physique, Leylin could only pray that Pam was not trampled to death in the chaos.

‘It’s my chance!’ Leylin’s figure nimbly danced through the crowd, heading in the opposite direction. The cries of the ogres were even more clear there, and the horrifying sounds of tearing flesh rang out.

‘The main forces of the ogres should be here. I can take perfect advantage of this chaos, furthermore...’ Leylin’s eyes glinted coldly.

The ogres did not hold a numbers advantage over the mercenary group. They could try to defeat them heads on, but it would come at a terrible cost. Instead, they’d set up an ambush, even leaving an escape route at the back.

This wasn’t out of goodwill. Their goal was to further incite chaos among the group— when there was still a chance of escape,

not everyone would be courageous enough to look forward and risk their lives. In order to have a chance at survival, how many would not hesitate to strike at their own companions?

More importantly, pursuing scattered soldiers was a battle that practically could not be lost.

‘Only the two-headed leaders or ogre shamans could come up with such a plan...’ Leylin’s eyes glinted, ‘So the only way to survive is to head in the opposite direction and break through this formation. Their main forces are here, and there’ll be many scattered soldiers and prisoners. There’ll be little chance of people pursuing me. As long as I get a quick horse and sprint for a while, I’ll be able to get out of this ogre-filled region...’

Those who could see this path and take it were truly determined, and held perseverance. It was a pity that Leylin could see practically nobody who’d come to the same decision as himself.

Perhaps, there were a few intelligent merchants would have been able to understand this, but their panic had lowered their ability to think by a great amount. Or perhaps they were aware but lacked the strength to do this, and could only go along with the crowd and pray to the Goddess of Luck to aid in their escape.

‘Furthermore... If I don’t go to the frontlines, where will I get high-ranked ogres to absorb strength from?’ Leylin burst into an empty large horse carriage.

He was no longer dressed in leather armour, and the steel

longsword that he usually used was tossed aside. He'd dressed himself in black form-fitting clothing, using the same to hide half his face like a common thief.

The ring of wizardry glimmered faintly from his left hand on occasion, and there was a cold bloody light that flickered in the cuffs of his right hand, like the tongue of a poisonous snake.

The further he got, the lesser people there were. Flags, carriages, armour and weapons were abandoned everywhere. Blood flowed without end, forming dark red puddles on the ground.

A few ogres occasionally munched at incomplete corpses, just the sight alone enough to terrify someone. There were a few mercenary groups still immersed in battle. At the heart of it, the Ashen Hawks' flag stood tall.

"Captain, our brothers can't hold on for long!" The wizard waved her arm, and Inspirational Boost and several similar spells were cast unceasingly. It allowed the mercenaries nearby to perk up.

The Ashen Hawks and a few other midscale mercenary groups had previously held back a large portion of the ogres, allowing the merchant groups a chance to escape. An unending stream of ogres still surrounded, even outnumbering them at this point.

"We bought them the time to escape, we've done our jobs! Prepare the spells; the entire team will scatter and leave. Let's meet up again at the Giant Rock Town we passed by earlier!" Siegfried now had surging qi twining around his body. His armour

emitted a slight luster, and surprisingly enough it was a magic artifact that had a high grade.

His giant silver-white blade was now stained with the blood of the ogres.

Heaven Breaker! The terrifying might of the battle technique of a high-ranked fighter was much more powerful than Rafiniya's. Qi burst out like an arrow, instantly resulting in massive casualties amongst the ogres. There were even some cracks in the encirclement.

“Break out!” Siegfried urged his horse on madly, but while passing by the wizard, he spoke in a low voice, “Let's break out through the front and meet at the largest city ahead!”

As a veteran captain of a team, Siegfried was not as righteous and great as he appeared to be. In reality, good people never made it for long as mercenaries. As long as he and the wizard lived, the Ashen Hawks could be rebuilt at any point.

‘Just from the perspective of a mercenary, he's done very well. He shouldn't be reprimanded for what he said at the last bit...’ At the sidelines of the battlefield, Leylin hid in the shadows and hugged his arms while evaluating Siegfried, ‘But.. The ogres this time aren't quite so simple...’

He looked past the encirclement right in front of him. At the back, he saw a hint of intent to kill.

Chain Lightning! The black-robed wizard tore a scroll, and silver-white lightning chains exploded, leaping through the group of ogres. Those who were struck collapsed with a cry, a charred smell transmitting and opening a path for the wizard.

Upon seeing this, the wizard was delighted. However, before she could do anything else, a powerful magic undulation was transmitted from afar.

“Crap!” The wizard’s expression quickly changed.

Chapter 864 - Two-headed Ogres

These new ogres were more than two metres tall. They were dwarves given the ogre standard, but they had tattooed bodies and barbaric runes with unknown purposes.

“Ogre shamans!” The black-robed wizard exclaimed to herself. Shamans were the ogres who held bloodlines, ones who would awaken abilities similar to magic with age. They were the decision makers of ogre tribes. It was surprising that they lay in wait here.

The black-robed wizard suddenly had a premonition of a great catastrophe.

“Roar...” The ogre shamans gave the black-robed wizard no time to think. The tattoos and runes on their bodies shone layer by layer amidst their roars, their innate abilities as bloodline holders allowing them to cast such spells without learning or memorising anything. However, they still had the support and usage of the Weave.

Magical power gathered together, and numerous huge fireballs glowed orange as they tore apart the wizard’s frail armour. The wizard was burnt to ashes along with the horse she rode.

“Lena!” Siegfried’s eyes turned red, and he turned back despite having broken out of the siege, charging straight for the shamans.

While he might cold and selfish, Siegfried still prioritised his true friend and lover. The death of Lena immediately made him hot-

headed, filled with the desire and impulse for revenge.

Clang! A silver-white longsword was smashed mid-air by a large black claw hammer, producing a dull and loud sound.

The terrifying recoil allowed Siegfried to somehow regain his composure and take a proper look at his opponent. This was a two-headed ogre who was over four metres tall, its skin a frightening blood-red with scales on it. One of its two fierce-looking heads was larger than the other, disgusting saliva dripping from the canine teeth. The thing rode a deformed earth lizard with a similar number of heads, although one of those was just a huge tumour with vague features.

Roar... The two-headed ogre exclaimed, brandishing a giant, black claw hammer that had come out of nowhere, charging towards Siegfried.

The horrifying strength from its astounding physique caused Siegfried to retreat. While his warhorse was fierce, it was no match for the ogreish beast. It was already spewing white froth, evidently unable to continue.

After the appearance of the two-headed ogre, the rest of the shamans and ordinary ogres seemed to have found a pillar to rely on, and began to pursue and kill the other mercenaries.

With the help of the shamans, the casualties of the mercenaries were immense. Only a few successfully broke out, and none of them dared take a look back and fled.

“There’s even the two-headed ogre commander and ogre shamans!” Leylin exclaimed, eyes constantly flickering as he called up their stats.

[Name Unknown. Race: Ogre (Mutated) Gender: Male. Strength: 16, Agility: 7, Vitality: 15, Spirit: 6. Description: Two-headed ogres are mutants that occasionally appear in ogre tribes. Their two brains often leave them stuck between being wise or confused. Of course, there are exceptions where the intelligence of the ogres evolves. After evolution, the two-headed ogres are more powerful than ordinary ones. They, who have advanced in their wisdom, usually become the commanders of the ogre tribes.]

[Name Unknown. Race: Ogre (Shaman). Gender: Male. Strength: 5, Agility: 4, Vitality: 9, Spirit: 10. Feats: 1. Regeneration. Ogres have extraordinary regeneration abilities, and even if the head is detached, they can still survive for a long period of time. 2. Bloodline Holder: The ogres who have activated the bloodline of primordial spellcasters possess abilities similar to magic. However, the type of spells and number of times spells can be cast depends on how far the bloodline has been awakened.]

‘Pretty good stats. If I can devour all of them, things will be more perfect...’ The Devilblood Dagger silently appeared in Leylin’s hands. The devilish head hummed, as if speaking to its thirst for

flesh and blood.

“Now!” When Leylin stepped out of stealth, the dagger had already pierced the throat of an ordinary ogre.

Terrifying devouring force exploded, causing the other party to instantly turn into a withered corpse. A hot stream of energy flowed into his hands from the dagger and rose along his arm, followed by a prompt from the A.I. Chip.

[Beep! Host has gone through a one-time amplification from the Devilblood Dagger. Strength +0.1, Vitality +0.05.]

‘As expected of the ogres, they have very dense life energy!’ Leylin sighed in praise, feet still moving. It was like a death god had begun to dance, the dagger glinting with blood.

Afterwards, he jumped onto a masterless warhorse, riding away in a cloud of dust. The mercenaries had no idea what was happening beside them, nor did the simple-minded ogres. All they saw was a vile human jumping out and killing a number of their people.

Roar! Amidst the furious roars, an ogre shaman brought a few elite ogre warriors and gave chase.

The two-headed ogre who was their commander was still

contending with Siegfried. He was a high-ranked human warrior and not so easily defeated, and it could only let out a few cries that nobody could understand. A few ogres quickened their movements.

A handsome brown horse sped through the path, followed by a few boosted ogres. This strange group of a human and his pursuers soon covered a long distance.

There was a limit to the duration of a strength buff. Just as the shaman began to despair, it was was delighted to see that the human in front of it had stopped.

“Just one ogre shaman? What a disappointment.” Leylin reined in the warhorse, seeing the little team that had pursued him while looking disappointed.

However, the simple-minded ogres did not care for what kind of expression Leylin had on his face. In reality, if not for the lead of the two-headed ogre, they might not even know how to set up the simplest traps. Hence, after seeing their foe, all of them charged forward.

Tattoos lit up on the shaman’s body, turning into countless small fireballs.

Flight of the Dragon! The rays from a spell flashed at Leylin’s side, and immediately after he elegantly soared from the back of the horse rapidly.

This advanced version of Fly allowed wizards to change directions quickly, and for those with great control like Leylin it only served to make them stronger.

Rumble! The warhorse that had been struck by the flames didn't even have the time to produce a miserable cry before it turned into a pile of ash. Leylin's figure, on the other hand, was like an eagle as he swooped down from the sky.

Roar! Leylin easily dodged a few fireballs, and a blood red light glimmered as he pierced through an ogre's throat.

With these quick attacks, the enraged shaman's spells had been emptied, and it had turned into someone even weaker than a normal ogre.

“Even if you can use magic, you're too simple-minded to use it well.” A crimson tornado blew past, and the ogres that now had no defence became prime targets for the airborne Leylin. After a few pass-bys, the ogres collapsed one by one. At the end, the bloody dagger struck the shaman's forehead.

[Beep! Host has gone through a one-time amplification from the Devilblood Dagger! Vitality +0.2. Agility +0.1. Strength +0.2.]

The A.I. Chip's voice sounded.

Ogres had strong muscles and flesh, and were comparable to middle-ranked warriors. They weren't easily found in such great numbers. However, Leylin's spirit state stayed constant, which was a pity.

After hitting the threshold that of 10 points, the Devilblood Dagger had become much less effective. If not, the once-Sovereign King of Gluttony, Beelzebub, could use just the Devilblood Dagger to establish a terrifying army that would get stronger the more it fought. He'd be able to take over the prime material plane.

'Since I've confirmed his location...' Leylin thought about it, and then flung dust behind.

"Dust of Disappearance! Spell of Invisibility!" Once the spells were cast, his body grew transparent and slowly disappeared into thin air.

As a wizard, Leylin naturally had considered using a flying spell and passing through this region, but he'd then abandoned this thought. The ogre-infested region was vast, and it was impossible for him to identify Beelzebub's location. There were also limitations when it came to flying spells. If the place he landed was where Beelzebub moved about, or if he caught the attention of ogres and was attacked with magic or crossbow attacks... Leylin was not willing to take on the consequences.

As he was right now, it was impossible for him to win against the two-headed ogre commander, much less the joint attack from

numerous huge ogres.

Now though, with a general understanding of where the ogres were located and with their attention focused on the human merchant organisations as well as the mercenaries, Leylin was confident in being able to sneak back.

After all, an opportunity to see so many ogres was rare. Leylin also wanted to raise his abilities all the way to 10 points.

With the help of an invisibility spell, Leylin successfully returned to the battlefield, the ordinary ogres unable to discover him at all. Unless a shaman had awakened a detection spell and used it at the right time, he was safe.

The battle was already reaching its end. Many mercenary bodies were strewn everywhere, turning into the ogres' rations. Only the central battlefield still had sounds of a fight.

Chapter 865 - Another Meeting

At the centre of the battlefield were the high-ranked warrior Siegfried and the two-headed ogre commander.

Siegfried's body was now soaked in blood, and his warhorse had long since disappeared. There was a massive wound on his thigh now, and he could only use the silver-white longsword as a crutch to stay upright.

Opposite him, the two-headed ogre only seemed a little ruffled, but had no large injuries. Just from its heaving chest, it was obvious that much of its energy had been exhausted, and it might even have suffered internal injuries.

The few shamans nearby surrounded the two along with the regular warriors. Evidently, the victor had already been decided. Unless he got some assistance or pulled out a powerful magic scroll, the future of this high-ranked warrior would be bleak.

“Huff, huff... So I'm finally going to die?” Everything in front of Siegfried was a blur. Watching the two-headed ogre closing in, his limbs were like lead, with no strength in them whatsoever.

“Lena, I'm coming to keep you company!” The various scenes from his life appeared in Siegfried's mind, finally stopping on the instant that the black-robed female wizard smiled.

Afterwards, he watched the large claw hammer strike down, the target obviously being his brain. If nothing went wrong, his head

would have burst apart like a pumpkin.

However, the lady luck seemed to favour him at that moment. The huge claw hammer stopped still in mid-air, and the two-headed ogre's expression was filled with fury and shock. A crimson dagger appeared through its chest.

“What’s going on?” A hint of doubt flashed on Siegfried’s face, and his body began to involuntarily rise.

A young man with a draconic expression had grabbed hold of his arm and was flying speedily, the winds that struck Siegfried’s face were so strong that he could feel pain. At his back were the enraged howls of the ogres, as well as a few useless fireballs or lightning arrows.

‘Hold Person! As well as Flight of the Dragon! Have I been rescued by a passing wizard?’ Siegfried suddenly felt a hope for survival.

At this moment, he saw the wizard doing a pretty turn in mid-air, evading the attacks of the shamans on the ground. He pointed downwards with his right hand, and terrifying black corrosive clouds descended and blocked the views of many ogres.

Cloudkill! Leylin, who now had nothing to worry about, flapped his wings and carried Siegfried away from the battlefield.

Feeling his head spin as he flew, Siegfried crumpled to the

ground, the smell of soil and crisp grass having him involuntarily take a few greedy breaths. It was only at this moment that he could size up the wizard that had saved his life.

‘Very young, but his magic abilities far exceed Lena...’

Siegfried respectfully lowered his head. He knew that there were many spells that could help maintain one’s youth. The wizard who looked young in front of him might very well be an old freak with mood swings.

‘But he looks rather familiar... Wait!’ Siegfried struggled to get up, “Are you the fighter who was accompanying that high-ranked female knight, Ley?”

“You actually remember me?”

“Whatever it is, thank you for saving me!” Siegfried thanked him sincerely, and tacitly did not ask questions regarding Leylin.

“Don’t worry about it. I just couldn’t bear to let this go to waste!”

“Couldn’t bear to let what go to waste?” At that moment, Siegfried felt an unprecedented sense of danger, but he who was grievously injured had no way to resist. At the moment of his death, all he saw was a blood-red dagger piercing his throat.

‘If he was going to kill me... why save me?’ Siegfried closed his eyes with this question inside his head, while Leylin felt the

immense power gained from the Devilblood Dagger.

A two-headed ogre commander and a high-ranked warrior on top of that; it made him feel slightly full.

At this moment, the prompt of the A.I. Chip sounded in Leylin's mind.

[Beep! Host has gone through a two-time boost from the Devilblood Dagger. Strength+2.5, Agility+1, Vitality+2.65, Spirit+0.001.]

A hot stream flowed from the dagger to all parts of his body, and was greedily absorbed by his cells. Leylin lifted his right arm, the slender palm holding within it strength that was now not lacking when compared to the ogres. On top of that, there were even constant after-images from it.

"I'm quite close to having all my attributes at 10 points, reaching the fundamental first step of perfecting my genes..." Leylin mumbled, looking at his stats. There were already changes.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 16. Race: Human, Rank 10 Wizard. Strength: 8. Agility: 7.6. Vitality: 9.2. Spirit: 10. Status: Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite. Possessed Spell Slots: Rank 4 spell slot (3), Rank 3 spell slot (5), Rank 2 spell slot (7), Rank 1 spell slot (???), Rank 0 spell slot (???)]

“Vitality is already very close to the bottleneck. Besides, a stronger body is more suitable for my spiritual force...” Regular wizards commonly had powerful spiritual force but weak bodies. Leylin, however, was entirely different. Alongwith powerful spiritual force, he also had a terrifying vitality and strength comparable to holy warriors!

“Things will only be perfected when my vitality matches my spirit. Strength and agility are both important as well... Are these the laws governing the World of Gods?” Leylin sighed, and his hands then began to search the high-ranked knight’s body in a practiced manner. As a high-ranked fighter and the captain of the large mercenary group, the Ashen Hawks, he should have some good items on his body. Leylin never let chances like these pass by, but was left disappointed.

“Besides the magical armour and weapons, he doesn’t even have a bag of holding? Does that mean all mercenaries are poor, and even a first class captain is the same?” Leylin only managed to find a few magic artifacts and a coin pouch from Siegfried’s corpse. There were tens of gold kronas inside, as well as a few cards from the church of wealth, which would come up to around ten thousand kronas.

It was a pity that these cards were bound to the user and had to be authenticated to use. After his death, nobody could take out that money unless they could deceive the verification methods of divine force, as well as deal with the rage of the Goddess of Wealth. When it came to those who vied for coins with her, the Goddess of Wealth would probably become even more crazed than an enraged

dinosaur!

For regular bandits, such a profit was a great wealth enough to squander away for half a lifetime, even though the crystal cards could not be converted. However, Leylin cared little for this.

‘Something’s off! To take care of such a large mercenary group, the Ashen Hawks as well as wizard, he should have more wealth than that. Could there be other hiding places? In that case...’ Leylin quickly peeled off Siegfried’s clothes and checked everything inch by inch.

Finally, he found something. At an area near his chest on the shirt, there was a difference in terms of texture as compared to the surrounding regions. If one did not look closely, it was impossible to identify.

This method of concealment immediately aroused Leylin’s interest. He quickly cut out this material and began to unravel this riddle.

‘Mercenaries use potions of invisibility at most. With the A.I. Chip’s simulation tests, they’re easily found, but with a wizard by his side, it might be necessary to use magic...’ Such intricate decryption work obviously was not a huge issue for Leylin. Soon enough, after being soaked in a solution, the fabric of the shirt was dyed a light yellow.

Reveal All! Appraisal! Rays from a series of spells appeared, and light red lines appeared on the parchment to form a map.

“A treasure map? Interesting!” Leylin memorised the map in an instant. Upon seeing the name of the region in the corner, the sides of his lips quirked slightly.

“So it’s in the Dambrath Capital? I should take a look then...” After hastily tidying up the traces here, Leylin then left the area.

“I took care of the two-headed ogre, and without a leader, there will probably be unrest amongst them. There’ll even be power struggles for the new commander position; they likely won’t have the energy to pursue me. The merchant group have walked quite a distance, and I’ll be able to reach Gloomwood Castle a short distance away. That’s an important checkpoint into the kingdom. After that, I’ll enter the central plains, where I won’t be threatened by the ogres...”

Leylin found his way and began to hasten towards Gloomwood Castle.

“Sigh... I should have kept the warhorse. I’m going to have to walk there with my own two feet. I hope I’ll find a few lost warhorses. Even if they’re worn out, I’ll still take them...” Just as Leylin was mumbling, his expression suddenly changed, “What the hell, there really is one!”

His expression abruptly showed delight as he turned to the right. A couple hundred metres ahead there was a black dot eventually turned larger, and the regular sounds of trotting were heard. After that, a figure being carried on the back of the horse entered

Leylin's sights.

However, after he got closer, Leylin's smile widened.

"Hey, we meet again!" Leylin took the initiative to draw close and greet him, while the other party looked as if he had seen a ghost.

"Damn it- No, I mean... Ley! Why are you here?" In front of Leylin was that human archer who had stolen Rafiniya's warhorse amidst the chaos. As for his name? Leylin had never taken notice of that.

He had actually dared break out of the siege by fleeing in the opposite direction and succeeded! His luck and guts were not to be underestimated. However, he did not seem to be in the best condition now. Not only did he have injuries, the large wooden bow that was always by his side had disappeared.

Chapter 866 - Coincidence

“I don’t care what you’re thinking right now. Give me that warhorse!” Leylin watched him, his eyes full of ridicule.

“He... hehe... I’m only borrowing it from Rafiniya. I was going to...” The archer had a forced smile on his face, but then his expression suddenly changed, “Look there!”

Without waiting for Leylin to turn, he raised his arms and shot three spring-loaded arrows towards Leylin’s face.

“Go!” After shooting those arrows, the archer did not even give Leylin another look. Instead, he whipped the horse he was mounted on, wanting to leave as soon as possible.

He could tell that Leylin had no injuries at all and was in a much better state than he was. To be able to break out of the encirclement of the ogres without injury meant that Leylin was not someone he could contend with at this point. Hence, the archer firmly chose to flee.

“A great decision, though it’s a pity that it’s pointless...” A magic missile flew from Leylin’s hands. With a strange trajectory, it sent the arrows flying, and without losing power struck the archer’s back.

Pak! The archer suddenly flew from the horse, a terrifying sunken wound on his back.

“You– You’re a wizard!” The archer struggled, eyes full of longing as he reached towards the skies fiercely with fingers like chicken claws. His body thrashed around wildly as if he was in the throes of death. Seconds later, he stopped moving.

Having lost its new master, Nick stopped galloping. The warhorse whinnied as it began to leisurely nibble at the grass on the side.

“I’m your master now.” Leylin moved forward and grabbed Nick’s reins, swinging onto its back without hesitation as he announced his ownership.

Nick had no objection whatsoever to his actions, as expected of a warhorse with no integrity. Or perhaps, it had a one-track mind and had no ability understand something so profound. As Leylin squeezed his thighs against the horse, the black warhorse immediately seemed to turn into a streak of lightning and began to speed ahead on the ground.

As a knight’s mount, it was obviously more spirited than other horses, and Leylin found it wonderful.

He wasn’t too far from their previous battlefield, and there was the occasional luck, or perhaps unfortunate, person who had escaped the ogres’ pursuit. Leylin chose to pay no attention to their cries for help.

Even if those merchants showed off their sparkling gold kronas,

they meant nothing to him. After all, the added wealth of all these little merchants might not even be enough to make up the amount of gold krona that he used in a single experiment. Why would he bother with this?

However, after passing by a small forest, something unexpected happened. Nick, who had been tame all this while, suddenly went mad and dashed into the bushes.

“Why is it doing this? Don’t tell me...” While he could forcefully control the horse, Leylin only pulled at the reins for a bit and then gave up.

In his opinion, there was no harm in doing something if it was convenient for him, and he could even save his own party without putting in a lot of extra effort. He had no idea how effective his help would be, though.

After passing through the thick layer of black brambles, a desperate scene appeared in front of him.

A carriage that had lost its mount had collapsed to the side, whereat Hera and her sister were embracing each other and shivering. Numerous terrifying ogres surrounded them, eyes full of unconcealed greed.

Rafiniya was holding her sword with both hands, her armour full of holes. There were traces of ground flesh and blood on it, and it was clear she had experienced countless bitter battles.

The female knight now had a deep wound on her thigh, where one could even somewhat see the bones. This made the girl grit her teeth, crystalline tears appearing at the corners of her eyes. Despite it all, she maintained the determination on her face. Without her protection, Hera and her sister would long since have become rations for the ogres.

Putting two and two together, Leylin had a general idea of what had happened. After being separated in the streams of people, they had run wildly all over the place. With Rafiniya's help, they took care of many enemies and had finally arrived here.

“However, if they chose this direction purposely instead if accidentally, Hera is more wise than I previously assumed...” The three ogres that were attacking them were normal warriors, and there were no shamans present. They may be huge threats to the heavily injured Rafiniya, but they were nothing at all to Leylin.

“Hey, beautiful ladies. Good morning!” Leylin seemed to arrive like an unexpected guest, leisurely greeting everyone as if he had coincidentally and naturally bumped into them on his afternoon stroll.

“Nick!” Rafiniya saw her black warhorse, eyes blazing, “And Ley! You darned thief! If not for my companion being stolen, how would I have...”

Leylin was completely immune to the words of this female knight. Upon hearing her words, he merely rolled his eyes, automatically tuning her out.

Growl... After seeing Leylin's appearance, the few ogres with simple minds had no other thoughts as they pounced forward.

"My longsword was discarded just now. What a pity..." Leylin patted at his warhorse, and Nick was able to leap in a way it was unable to usually. It jumped over the ogre's head and came to Rafiniya's side.

"Give me that sword." Rafiniya initially looked ready to refuse, but for some reason she felt a sense of terror as she looked at Leylin's calm face. She obediently handed it over.

'Strange... why did I...' Before she had the time to ponder this, however, her little mouth opened in shock and amazement.

"Not bad!" Leylin shook the knight sword in his hands. As a high-ranked knight, Rafiniya's equipment was all of a high grade. Whether it was her horse or her sword, they were much better than what he had before.

The glaring brilliance of qi burst forth from Leylin's hands.

Battle technique: Qi Strengthening! Battle technique: Charge!
Battle technique: Cross Slash!

Leylin's figure instantly turned into a streak of black, and the longsword was enveloped in the luster of qi as he began his assault on the three barbaric beings.

Cross-shaped light-rays flashed ahead, and three malicious heads flew off. Even after the corpses of the giant ogres crumpled to the ground, Rafiniya still seemed to be in disbelief.

‘On top of being able to activate Qi, his advanced battle techniques and his proficient battle techniques are even better than my teacher’s...’ Rafiniya looked absent minded, not even able to catch her longsword properly when Leylin tossed it back.

The battle techniques Leylin had just shown were not inferior to the most powerful person she’d ever seen, and that was a high-ranked paladin!

“Thank you.” At this moment, Hera hugged her little sister as they stood up, eyes full of gratitude aimed at Leylin. If not for Rafiniya and Leylin, she and her sister would long since have turned into jerky for the ogres to stockpile. There was no way to even escape.

As for Leylin’s sudden ‘disappearance’, this lady rationally chose not to pursue this. Things were very dangerous now, and in a situation where Rafiniya was gravely injured, they were in need of Leylin’s protection. Leylin did not even need to harbour malicious intent. As long as he abandoned the three girls, they were in deep trouble.

She immediately spoke out, “Thank you Mister Ley. I’ll increase the commission once we reach the town, I’m sure it will satisfy you.”

She had especially lowered her own status while speaking, and Leylin nodded on the inside.

“Wait... If you’re going to talk about raising the commission, then poor Old Pam should have a part of it too!” At this moment, the carriage at the side completely fell apart, and a dwarf with a broken leg rolled out like a ball.

“Things were completely chaotic when we were surrounded. Thankfully, we had Rafiniya protecting us, and we also bumped into Mister Pam after that...” Hera smiled forcefully as she explained the situation to Leylin. He merely rolled his shoulders, speechless at the dwarf’s luck in keeping his life. Or perhaps, he was really blessed by the Goddess of Luck?

Leylin and the group set out immediately after some rest and reorganisation. This was still a danger zone, after all.

However, the horse carriage from before was now useless. Leylin had no choice but to modify the remains of the carriage to a handcart, allowing Hera, her sister and Rafiniya to squeeze together. They had to bring the dwarf Pam along as well. The warhorse, Nick, was regrettably demoted to a worn-out old horse, exerting all its strength to pull the cart forward slowly.

“You didn’t see it, but three ogres pounced towards Old Pam! Each of their mouths were as large as my head...” From atop the cart came Old Pam’s bragging with gusto. Rafiniya squeezed forward, looking at Leylin.

“When are you returning Nick to me?”

“Give me a ransom in exchange. Don’t forget, this warhorse is something I got from winning against the archer. This is a place is protected by the laws of the kingdom. If you want the horse, go look for the archer...”

Sitting atop Nick, Leylin spoke seriously. This was much like the thinking of a bandit.

“Damn it, that archer’s corpse should have already entered the stomachs of the ogres!” Rafiniya mumbled to herself, occasionally muttering words like ‘thief’. At the end, she unwillingly tossed a gold card at Leylin.

“These are all my savings. I have nothing more...”

“That’s not bad...” Taking a look at the numbers, Leylin then began to whistle contentedly, “Deal! It’s yours!”

Rafiniya then gloomily found out that she was unable to ride Nick due to her injuries. Everything seemed to stay the same as before.

Chapter 867 - Gloomwood Castle

“Thank you, Ley!” Rafiniya’s voice sounded after a while.

The female knight was no fool. She knew that without Leylin, they really would have died at the hands of the ogres, disappearing into their mouths. She obviously didn’t want to die like that, and just the thought of it already left her in fear.

All those adventure books were scams! There were no romantic heroes and beautiful princesses. Rather, there were thieves and bandits, as well as ogres who ate people alive!

“So... Now that your fantasies have been destroyed, will you still continue adventuring?” Leylin asked in curiosity.

“Of course. This is my path as a knight!” The female knight’s voice was filled with resolution. “As long as I can endure, evil will be destroyed by my hands one day. With my work, the world will regain its beauty!”

“...” Leylin rolled his eyes speechlessly. This directionally-challenged moron seemed to show no signs of waking up to reality.

“What kind of expression is that?”

“No, I was just thinking that you’re very suited to becoming a paladin of the God of Justice. Really!”

.....

Thankfully, the Goddess of Luck finally showed mercy on them, allowing their little group to leave the region where the ogres had wreaked havoc.

If not, once Leylin was surrounded by the ogres, he would probably abandon everyone and make a path for himself to escape. Besides him, everyone, including the warhorse Nick, would become rations and jerky for the ogres.

“Are they all confused because of the commander’s death?” On the way, he bumped into a few members of the merchant groups who had been separated, and even a few thieves and the like.

It was a pity for them that even Rafiniya had learnt to steel her resolve. The high-ranked female knight who had regained a portion of her strength did not need much energy to take care of these people.

All that had continued until this day, when a small city with a black wall appeared in front of Leylin.

“We’re here, this is Gloomwood Castle. After this place, we will reach the central plains of the Dambrath Kingdom, the territories there managed by people directly subordinate to the king.” After seeing this city, Rafiniya screamed in joy. Hera and Yalani smiled, looking as if a weight had been lifted from their shoulders.

They were only halfway through their long trip, but the exhaustion and terror was more than enough to leave them in fear.

“Halt! Stop the vehicle for an inspection!” At the city gate, Leylin’s group of strangely-dressed adventures were immediately stopped by the guards.

‘Oh? These soldiers seem pretty strong... And they’re Professionals who have seen blood already.’ Leylin saw Hera going up ahead to negotiate with them, his brows furrowing slightly. With his experience, he could obviously see that the guards were stronger than usual. They could even be people in charge of Professional groups, incomparable to the previous party.

He could sense tens of elite archers aiming their weapons at this area from the shadows, leaving him with a sense of danger.

‘To even give me a sense of danger... These archers should have equipment like the Spellslayer Arrow. How wealthy...’ Leylin shot a glance towards the top of the city wall discreetly, and then maintained a nonchalant face as he looked at Hera and the rest.

After checking the proof that they were mercenaries and nobles, the middle-aged soldier who seemed to be the leader headed over to them.

“Terrible events have occurred at Gloomwood Castle lately. Don’t stay long if you don’t have business here.”

“Thank you for kind intentions. Officer, is this about the ogres?” A hint of curiosity showed in Hera’s eyes.

“The ogres? They’re far from real devils...” The middle-aged soldier sneered, but did not elaborate. Only when he passed by Leylin and the other mercenaries did he warn them, “Don’t stir up trouble inside, or else...”

His threatening words immediately angered Rafiniya. Leylin and Old Pam, on the other hand, had met such situations before. They rolled their shoulders back in answer, though it was not obvious whether they truly took heed of the advice.

“Hmph...” The leader did not argue about this with Hera, looking disappointed. He waved his hand, “Go on!”

“The strength of this legion doesn’t lose out to the ogre tribes...” Leylin hung his head, eyes flickering with wit.

‘Seems like the kingdom’s power and soldiers are the true trump cards of the human race in the World of Gods. Those inferior mercenary groups can’t be compared at all...’ Leylin could finally see the aura of a nation’s soldiers, with as many sharp swords as there were trees in the forest and as many pikes as there were thorns in a bush. They might even have the support of wizards and priests. The mid-ranked officer just now had an aura very similar to a high-ranked warrior, and he had evidently gone through numerous battles. The aura of someone who had seen blood in battle was something most mercenaries could not match.

‘With how he spoke, something definitely happened here...’ The desolate streets and the tight security in the city left Leylin frowning.

“We plan to rest here for a while. We might also need to buy a carriage and recruit a few more mercenaries...” Hera said once they found an inn, looking tired as she spoke to Leylin and the rest.

“Mm, we do need a new carriage.” Rafiniya was obviously approved of this plan. They had finally made it to a human city with great difficulty, and she could not wait to get some good rest. For a lady of nobility, there was nothing harder to endure than filth and grime. It was a pity that there was no lack of these on the journey, especially for mercenaries. That the poor girl hadn’t already gone insane showed the resolve she’d gained from her knight training.

Pam approved of this well. He was already itching to exchange the ogre ears for the commission, as well as buy a new batch of rum.

“Alright, we’ll meet here three days from now.”

Leylin nodded without much care. He was now slightly curious about the events in Gloomwood Castle.

“Wait, Ley! Your friend is in need of your help! My injuries need healing from a priest...” When the time to part came, Old Pam grasped Leylin firmly, eyes gleaming with tears.

Looking at the state he was in, Leylin had no choice but to roll his shoulders back and bring Old Pam, with his broken leg, along. The dwarf worshipped the God of Warriors anyway, and the church wasn't too far off from the Mercenary Guild.

“Divine spell— Cure Moderate Wounds!” Holy light shone from the priest's hands at the church of warriors, and the injury on Pam's thigh quickly recovered. A new layer of tender flesh grew out.

“The fee is 5 kronas!” The priest looked pious, but did not lower the fees at all. Most churches functioned by getting money for healing the wounds of their followers.

The gods needed money themselves to construct their extravagant churches. More importantly, they needed to lure in worshippers with more generous conditions. Old Pam, who was usually miserly, paid up happily and did not dare take advantage of this at all. Only after he left the church did he look regretful.

“If not for our employer wanting to leave in the next few days, Old Pam would rather look for a doctor or potioneer. Damn it, 5 kronas! How many bottles of rum would that get me... Oh, mighty God, Old Pam did not say that on purpose...”

Old Pam continued to mumble, “No! This should be included in the fees we get from our employer. You'll back me up, right, Ley?”

Leylin pretended not to hear anything, walking to the entrance of the Mercenary Guild with the dwarf. Old Pam impatiently

exchanged the ogre ears to make up for his losses, while Leylin went to the mission hall.

The hall was much smaller than the one in Emon City. A few mercenaries were seated there, and whether in terms of quality or quantity they seemed to be lacking.

This strange atmosphere was explained after Leylin looked at the mission board.

“High grade mission: Track down traces of devil followers. This mission is extremely dangerous. Please think over it carefully before choosing it.”

“High grade mission: Investigate the evil god ceremony in the home of Lord Wokdo.”

“High grade mission: Investigate cause of death of Baron Faylen.”

Numerous high grade missions were hung up in a row, looking marvellous. It was a pity that few mercenaries dared take them on.

‘Interesting. A devil?’ A smile rose about Leylin’s lips all of a sudden. As he recalled the unusual mobilisation of the troops, as well as the worried look on the mid-ranked officer’s face, everything grew clear.

Gloomwood Castle was in a strange state because of the activities of devil worshippers. These high-difficulty missions were usually

left to the churches and nation's troops. It was no wonder that the mercenaries were not interested.

However, them having no interest did not mean that Leylin was the same. He'd always been curious about hell and the devils in this world. Beelzebub's memories had ensured that he knew as much about them as an Archduke, but theory and reality were two separate things.

‘Based on his memories, there are nine levels of hell here. Each have their own rulers governing them, as well as a few public regions... To be able to break through the restrictions of the dimension and arrive at the prime material world to spread belief... This is something that only a ruler of the same rank as him could accomplish...’

At his most powerful, the Sovereign King of Gluttony, Beelzebub, was as strong as a Magus who'd comprehended laws. At the very least, he was stronger than the lesser gods here.

It was no wonder then that the traces of devils had set the city on high alert.

The scene that the soul seed had projected at the beginning appeared before his eyes once again. ‘I wonder how that little guy Tiff is doing now? He received the power of the soul seed from my main body. If he managed to adapt to it, he should be rather strong now...’

Chapter 868 - One After Another

When their souls had first battled for control of the body, Leylin had managed to help Tiff out, bestowing formidable powers on him. It was intended to be an experiment; not only would a surviving Tiff be of huge aid to him, but it would also give him some rare results.

How could he not have left himself a counter against the powers he had originally bestowed? Furthermore, who could compare to the ancient Magi with regards to the control over the soul force.

‘My soul force wasn’t originally accustomed to the laws of the World of Gods, and couldn’t help but diminish continually. But Tiff was a native. Hence, there was still a possibility that he could be sustained by absorbing the powers that I left him. In view of that, his stats would...’ Something flashed in Leylin’s eyes.

It made sense for soul force from other worlds to be unable to survive in the World of Gods. But the strength that Leylin left for Tiff was like a seed, and it changed him completely. Furthermore, as long as the foundation was there, no matter how far Tiff advanced in the future, he would not be able to resist the influence Leylin held over him.

If Leylin exploited him correctly, Tiff would be an advantageous pawn for him.

‘I was staying overseas back then, and did not care much about the mainland. Thus, I also didn’t ask about Tiff, but it’s an entirely

different matter now. The time is ripe,' Leylin decided.

“Greetings, copper-ranked mercenary, sir! Can I help you?” The maid behind the counter asked in a professional but mechanical tone after she saw the identify proof Leylin handed over. It was all she'd do for a copper-ranked mercenary.

“Show me the details of the top 3 missions!” Leylin wasn't bothered at all about it.

“The missions of those devil worshippers?” The girl raised her head, and scanned at Leylin with a look of derision. “Superior missions could only be accepted by a mercenary ranked gold and above, so please work on raising your grade!”

“I was not thinking of taking it, I just wanted to catch a glimpse of the report. I remember all mercenaries have the authority to do this, am I not right?” Leylin furrowed his brows.

“That-That's right...” The maid unwillingly replied. It was probably her first time encountering someone like Leylin, “But details are only free for those at the silver grade and above, you have to pay 10 coppers!”

“That's no problem at all!” Under her contemptuous gaze, Leylin threw 10 coppers on the table and grabbed the documents from her hands, before heading towards the corner seat to look into them. Being able to obtain information for such a price was already a profit for him.

But after reading the first few sentences, Leylin's expression darkened. Surprise, astonishment and all sorts of other expressions flashed across his face before it landed on a sinister smile, "Old friend..."

He dropped his eyes to one of the sentences,

"...the victim's carcass was badly damaged and parts of the flesh were missing..."

"...when the Baron was found, he was kneeling on the ground in a bizarre manner, pouring blood. His tongue was severed and forced down his throat..."

"...the soldiers launched surprise attacks on a few dangerous locations but gained nothing in return. The thieves found pentagrams used to commune with other dimensions in the flooring of the house, and determined it to be the coordinates to the ninth level of hell..."

'A sacred emblem with the image of a twisted fang... Only devotees of Beelzebub would adopt such a method of murder...' Leylin smiled as he read on. If he had to choose a devil to face, he'd definitely choose this one whom he'd fooled previously.

'The fellow should still be asleep. The region of hell that he was occupying will soon be overturned. Furthermore, he is unable to receive prayers nor provide spells for his followers, their faith might be challenged...' Leylin's eyes shone, he's found the perfect prey.

‘If you piece all these reports together, it’s the prelude to a big bloody sacrificial ceremony, and the target is that Beelzebub...’ Leylin’s rich experiences along with Beelzebub’s memories allowed him to see everything clearly within seconds.

‘I’m afraid this is those worshippers’ last resort, given that they haven’t been able to communicate with him for a long time.’ Leylin’s expression wasn’t looking too great. Big, bloody sacrificial ceremonies would affect the whole city, and the death toll would number greater than a thousand.

But of course, all this was useless. No matter how much they sacrificed, Beelzebub would not regain consciousness. Instead, this would attract hostility from the gods. Most importantly, Leylin would be dragged into this whole mess!

‘Well, I guess I’ll gladly receive Beelzebub’s followers.’ This empty church had lost the protection of its god, and was also compatible with the law of devouring he had grasped. To Leylin, this hollow shell was a big present.

Though most of the members were the cruelest dregs of society, or even unusual beings and demonic creatures, its sheer size was enough to make Leylin jealous. He had to accumulate all of this himself to become a god in the future.

As for Beelzebub, he was long out of Leylin’s consideration. He walked out happily with his gains, and turned into a dark alley...

Once he made sure nobody was around, Leylin's aura transformed into that of a god. "My follower, Tiff!" he made a solemn call, and a strange energy dispersed.

Moments later, Leylin opened his eyes, his expression looking weird, 'With such a short distance, is he in the Dambrath Kingdom?'

A dark shadow was moving at great speeds through the broad plains. It stopped all of a sudden, revealing a pale, aged face.

He looked emotional, and was even tearing up. He immediately knelt on the ground as he managed to choke out his next words, "My great lord, Kukulkan! Have you finally heard me?"

This man looked a lot like Tiff, but it wasn't the boy from back then anymore. A large amount of energy circulated around his body.

"My God..." Tiff looked staunch after his prayer. Ever since Eldath's church had destroyed everything he had, he'd set himself on the path of rebellion. This was why he was a wanted criminal throughout the World of Gods.

Thankfully, the power Leylin left him back then helped him through the toughest period of his life. As a result, the bogus about Kukulkan that Leylin had once made up had warped into his absolute faith.

“I can’t believe I felt the power of you as I went out to keep an eye on the devil worshippers, my Lord...” Tiff’s body compressed into a stream of shadows, and sped towards Gloomwood Castle. He was even faster than a rank 15 Professional.

.....

At the same time, in the campsite of the ogres.

Roar! Roar! The ogre warriors waved the large warhammers in their hands in they fought, using magic as an aid every now and then. It was a pity that all of their efforts were nothing but a joke to the paladins.

‘Smite Evil!’ ‘Divine Punishment!’ Piercing holy light shot out from Lorent’s sword, and broke an ogre’s warhammer in a split second with its immense strength before slicing his head off. On the other hand, the clerics who had mastered divine spells from the God of Justice were also killing off the ogre shamans with no issues.

“How dare you see humans as food! The sins of this ogre tribe are unforgivable!” Lorent wiped his sword on the skin of one of the ogres beside him, and flashed a face of disgust. Flesh started showing.

“The vile ogres only deserve death!” The ogres in the campsite fell into chaos, merely ants to the high-ranked paladins and priests.

A ear-piercing growl sounded from the other side before low gasps and silence ensued. It was unsettling.

“Managed to get anything out of them?” Lorent looked at their team’s interrogation officer as he walked out, hands still freshly dyed in the ogres’ blood.

“They don’t have the biggest brains, and what they do have is reserved for fighting and eating. Even if I tried my best, the only information I got was that their leader was killed by a human wizard who then escaped...” The officer looked mildly disappointed, “If only we could use A memory extracting spell... But that would be trespassing into the domain of evil...”

Lorent was discontented with the officer’s attitude and mindset, but he did not want to create any conflicts at this point in time. “That is enough... At the very least, the possibility of the wizard being Leylin is high...

“It was probably this ogre tribe that attacked them first, forcing them to retaliate...” he said as he nodded.

“Then what are we waiting for now, let’s chase after them! My tools are getting impatient...” The officer licked his lip, his disgusting and sinister expression making Lorent look away. He wondered how someone like this managed to sneak into the investigative team.

The team continued their journey after sweeping the ogre site clean and headed towards Gloomwood castle.

.....

“I’m afraid I can’t stay for long...”

Leylin was changing his disguise at the moment. Things that could expose his identity, like the Ring of Wizardry, could absolutely not be worn. He even had to alter his hair colour and change his face’s shape.

‘But, judging by the God of Justice’s hatred for devils, if his followers find out that there are devil worshippers within this castle, would he still put in so much effort and look for me?’ Leylin smiled sinisterly.

Chapter 869 - Act

Leylin looked at himself in the mirror, and was satisfied with his new appearance. He originally looked like a westerner in the World of Gods, with bright golden blonde hair and clear blue eyes. However, his locks were now dyed black, and his eyes were a rich dark with blood-red sclera. His new appearance Exuded a never-ending aura of evil.

“With this extent, I don’t think anyone will associate me with the young master of the Faulen Family.” Leylin wore a sinister looking silver mask over his face and disappeared into the darkness.

Obviously, a change in appearance wouldn’t be enough. Thus, when Leylin reappeared his whole body seemed to have undergone an even greater and more terrifying transformation. He looked as if he were someone wrapped in mysteries, sinister energy encircling his body with a charming trace of the power of laws.

Once all the brilliant energy had fused into his body, Leylin completely resembled a devil who had ascended from hell, and even the aura of his soul had changed. A sense of power and danger emanated from his body in waves, and the surrounding space seemed to fold in on itself, as if everything was being devoured.

This was divinity! Only a divine power could accomplish this! Leylin had now become a divine being who grasped some power in the domain of devouring!

‘This imitation isn’t bad at all.’ Leylin looked at his new self and

noded in approval. His understanding of the law of devouring had already reached a peak. Only after he acquired Beelzebub's divine force and divinity could he advance to become a rank 7 Magus. In the World of Gods, this would be considered as having achieved godhood.

His understanding of the law would not disappear with reincarnation. Though it was tough to create and draw out divinity from nothing, it was still an effortless task for the A.I. Chip to imitate the aura and appearance of a divine being with the power of devouring.

‘I definitely cannot ascend to godhood solely in the domain of devouring. Even if I do that, I’m afraid I’ll be sent straight to hell. Even if I’m going to go there in the end, I can’t be thrown down so passively...’

There was also another advantage of being in his current form. Divine beings were practically immune to scrying spells, and Leylin, an otherworldly guest, was obviously immune too. It would be an absolute joke if anyone tried to gain more information on him through scrying.

“The show has begun,” Leylin turned his gaze to the bright moon before his silhouette suddenly blurred and disappeared into the darkness.

Most of Beelzebub's truesoul and divinity had been devoured by Leylin, along with a hundred thousand years of his memories as a devil. Thus, all of his followers were nothing but tragic beings in front of Leylin.

Everything was stored in his A.I. Chip, included Beelzebub's methods to communicate with them, or his habits and disposition and even the list of bishops and demons in different regions of the prime material plane.

Beelzebub's followers were unable to hide from Leylin, and thus Leylin had already made his plans after strolling about the castle.

Leylin's deified incarnation arrived in front of a vast building. Two guards there were loyally carrying out their responsibilities, making sure the entrance was secure.

'Even security officers fell to the attacks, no wonder they could carry out the blood sacrifice of an entire city so brazenly...' Leylin put both his hands behind his back and swaggered into the mansion.

The moment he stepped into the vicinity, he couldn't help but take a deep breath at the aura of evil within. He would have been completely unable to sense the soul undulations so precisely without the divinity that his current body possessed. Evil forces continued to circulate in Leylin's surroundings, making the glow of his imitated godhood even brighter. It seemed as if it was turning his pretense into reality.

'Eye of the Divine!' Through his imitated divine powers, Leylin was able to use something like magic to make himself invisible to the tight security. Once he passed through, he followed his instinct to a descending passageway behind a rock garden that was

obviously concealed.

“The stench of human blood... and the aura of low-ranked devils...” Leylin sniffed, but did not plan on making his way further.

“Who’s that?” His movement had alerted a nearby watchman, but he deliberately lowered his voice, seeming like he didn’t want to blow the matter up.

But in the darkness, a handful of otherworldly beings have already felt their way towards Leylin, obviously with the intention of mounting a sneak attack. However, when he saw these creatures up close, he didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry at the sight of them. “Are these what you are relying on? Devil priests like these? Is this an insult?”

Through his night vision, he had already seen who his attacker was—an amalgamation of badly damaged human carcass parts and heads. It looked like a massive ball of flesh. This inferior devil was of the lowest grade, and it was also the most common cannon fodder in the ninth level of hell.

The A.I. chip sent over the creature’s data to him.

[Inferior devil. Strength: 3 Agility: 1 Vitality: 5 Spirit: 0.1
Description: This is a common magical creature found in hell, usually a reincarnation of deceitful humans. Its IQ equates to that of a retarded human, and it is easily controlled by high-

ranked devils. Feats: 1. Fire Immunity, Poison Immunity. 2. Cold Resistance. 3. Acid Attack]

“Scram, you lowly ants!” Leylin said icily, using the language of the devils of hell.

Instantly, those poor devils were rendered completely defenceless under Leylin, someone who was as good as a near Archdevil. They immediately fell under his control.

The watchmen were left in shock, “W-Who are you exactly?”

“You aren’t qualified to know that.”

They did not dare to retaliate even as Leylin walked further in. Naturally, that was perhaps because they felt the intrinsic quality of a devil within him. Once he pushed through a door covered in fresh blood curses, a room that looked like a dining hall appeared in front of Leylin.

Fresh, steaming flesh was laid on the long dining table, and many worshippers raised their heads to look at Leylin who was an unwanted and unexpected guests. In their shock, they forgot to even wipe off the remnant blood from the side of their lips.

“What’s going on? Sybar, why did you let an outsider in?” The plump noble seated right in the centre sounded unhappy, and put on an resentful expression.

‘The bloody banquet. Isn’t this another one of Beelzebub’s favourite ceremonies?’ Leylin recognised the ceremony being conducted.

“All you maggots, can’t you tell?” Leylin’s voice was low but powerful, exploding with the dignity of divinity.

“This-This is the divine force of our Lord!” A devil priest yelped out of surprise, and the whole room suddenly followed him as they knelt down before Leylin.

“My Lord, you haven’t made contact with your followers for 20 years...” Tears filled the eyes of the priest.

“I have received the gift of our Lord and have become his Chosen and his substitute to lead you! Any objections?” Leylin announced bluntly.

Pretending to be Beelzebub’s Chosen and a divine being would allow Leylin to take control of all his followers as well as his priest network in the prime material world.

This was Leylin’s goal. He’d grown jealous of what was formed by a hundred thousand years of operations by an Archdevil. Moreover, he already had the Manderhawke Plate.

“None at all!” The priest was the first to surrender his loyalty to Leylin, dropping to his knees and kissing Leylin’s boots.

“Hold up, even if he has the favour of our Lord and and has gained divinity, what give him the rights to take control of us completely?” A royal raised up his opinion from the crowd, feeling like his interests were breached.

But he was silenced shortly after. A crimson blade was pinned into his throat in a split second, and the terrifying power of devouring had sucked him dry in no time.

Many took in sharp breaths and others cried out in surprise, “The Devilblood Dagger!”

“Any more objections?” The blade returned to Leylin’s hand as the carcass of the royal turned to ash, and in return Leylin gained the respectful gazes of almost everyone in the room. As Beelzebub’s worshippers, they definitely knew what the Devilblood Dagger could do.

One had to have sacrificed the flesh of more than ten thousand humans and high-ranked priests to receive such a terrifying weapon. One needed to prove their strength to complete the sacrificial ceremony and survive for so long, and the Devilblood Dagger confirmed Leylin’s.

“Great Lord, we pledge our loyalty to you!” Many followers chanted.

“Very well! Our Lord is currently injured and needs time to recover. My mission is to act on behalf of his conscient, and bring

together all the churches in the prime material world to restore our Lord's health with enough faith and followers." Leylin said halfheartedly.

"I see..." Most of them had already guessed that Beelzebub was hurt, but at this point in time it was too late for them to turn their backs on Leylin.

"Now, I'll give out the first mission. A team of paladins is heading towards us, I'll need your help." With his divinity, he was a Chosen of the church. He could sometimes even override the church head's authority!

After confirming his identity, Leylin deployed every follower with specific roles and ordered them to stall those paladins. These people were no match for them, but they were proficient at plots to stall time, as well as scheming and intrigue.

Chapter 870 - False God

“In addition, stop performing large-scale blood sacrifices. There’s no need for such obstructive activity before you hear further from me, especially something that’ll attract the attention of the churches,” Leylin reminded them again before leaving.

“Of course, Chosen of our Lord!” The devil priest answered without hesitation, not that he had any authority to go against Leylin’s words. Moreover, the reason for their enormous blood sacrifices was to attract Beelzebub’s attention. Now that he had already sent a substitute, there was no need for that anymore.

“Lord’s substitute, please grant us your name!” The aged devil priest plucked up his courage to ask right before Leylin left.

“My name?” Leylin smirked beneath his mask. “My name is Kukulkan!”

The power of faith essentially came from fear and obedience, respect and admiration, or from one’s soul force. Godhood originated from that as well. With a specific name, great power, and falsely assuming the identity of Beelzebub’s Chosen, he could win the reverence of these devil worshippers. He could even disseminate and spread Beelzebub’s faith before usurping everything.

However, this was the only mature organisation of Beelzebub’s that Leylin found somewhat acceptable. When he would build his own church in the future, these people would not be of much help.

After all, Leylin would not want his own church to be a gathering point for devil worshippers.

The next step was to cancel certain blood sacrifices and evil rituals that violated his core values. This was the domain of a benevolent god, and also an essential step for a divine being to gain extensive approval in the prime material plane.

“Lord Kukulkan, we will do as you wish and prepare for the recovery of our Lord!” Leylin was startled from his reverie as he watched the devil followers shouting his name loudly. A special energy akin to soul force enveloped him within the zealous ambience.

The false divine power of devouring almost went out of control and wanted to swallow this energy to transform completely, but Leylin resisted it.

‘The power of faith?’ Leylin signed internally before disappearing into a private room.

“You heard the Lord’s orders!” The devil priest straightened his back and looked at all of the followers, especially directing his gaze at the nobles. Having lost the powers that the devil bestowed upon him, the arrival of this divine being allowed him to regain some confidence.

“Get the tasks done quickly so that we can welcome those paladins of the God of Justice!” There was no room for reconciliation between devil worshippers and paladins. If they

met, it would be a fight to the death.

While one paladin was more than enough to slaughter an entire room of devil worshippers, strategy, allocation of manpower, and hidden actions would make things difficult for them.

“Of course!” A few of the nobles laughed sinisterly, the shadows they cast on the wall behind them looking like terrifying demons themselves.

.....

‘I can’t believe I have to play to dress up as god and play the devil twice in a day...’ Leylin had currently arrived outside the city.

He looked around vigilantly. His appearance of a powerful divine being was but a pretense, and he himself was only a rank 10 wizard. Had the devil worshippers just now rebelled against him, he was not sure that he’d have been able to suppress them. However, as he’d borrowed the superior aura of a high-ranked devil, he was certain he wouldn’t lose out.

However, him pretending to be a divine being, on top of his possession of the Devilblood Dagger, was enough to scare the hell out of those followers. Moreover, those who had offered sacrifices to the devils already had shackles on their souls. If they did not wish to be tortured even after death, they had to act according to Leylin’s wishes.

‘Compared to dealing with those low-ranked followers, this needs more attention...’ Leylin pulled himself together with a slight sigh, and a thread of flames appeared on his figure, taking the shape of a flame-winged serpent. The small blaze lit up the Gloomwood, giving off a demonic feeling.

‘He’s here!’ Leylin turned quickly. A black spirit was running towards him so quickly that it couldn’t be followed by the naked eye.

‘Advanced Barrier!’ ‘Advanced Protection!’ ‘Advanced Invisibility!’ A few enormous spell barriers were erected, separating the area from the outside world completely.

‘A high-ranked Professional? No, he’s even stronger than Odge and Boruj, almost a Legend...’ Leylin inwardly assessed as the person he was thinking of arrived in front of him.

“Tiff!” Formidable divine power circulated around the area, making Leylin seem like a god as he called out to Tiff. At the same time, the aura of his original form also rolled off his body.

“You’re not my God, but you have his power!” Tiff was indeed standing in front of Leylin, but he did not look like his previous self. His hair was now greying at the temples, and his vigilant eyes glared unwaveringly at Leylin.

Leylin felt several different probing spells targeted at him immediately, and if not for the fact that he was the original body and had the A.I. Chip’s help in concealing his abilities, it would be

have been difficult to deal with the fellow.

Brilliant divine power floated above Leylin's hand as he stared Tiff in the eye, "So, do you still have any suspicions?"

"I wouldn't dare! You are the favoured one of my Lord!" Tiff pressed his right hand to his chest as a form of respect and bowed, showing his acknowledgement of Leylin's identity.

Strong beings like this were not easily subdued. Honestly, if Tiff were to make any moves, he would have found out that Leylin was only a pretentious false god. Once he figured that out, taking care of Leylin would be as easy as popping a bubble.

"Since you've summoned me, what can I help you with?" Tiff still looked suspicious about the whole situation.

"Our Lord has already defeated the Archdevil Beelzebub and I've received orders to take over everything Beelzebub has in the prime material plane!" He kept to the truth. Tiff was the one person Leylin trusted the most here, even if he seemed doubtful of everything right now.

Even if the boy decided to go against him, Leylin could use the power he'd formerly left with Tiff to make him turn back.

'However, he was able to use the energy I left behind as a foundation to receive magical powers and become similar to a bloodline holder... Or should I say half-chosen? He's somewhat

talented...' Leylin seemed to have already seen beyond Tiff's facade.

"You've defeated the Archdevil? The Sovereign King of Gluttony?" Tiff's voice involuntarily cracked. He had obviously heard about this earth-shaking rumour. The loyalty of these worshippers, who'd already lost the magic abilities bestowed by the devil, had long been shaken. Some information had spread out.

Worshippers in the prime material plane were shallow. If Leylin had waited to make his move a couple of decades later, Beelzebub's people would have almost completely disappeared. Thankfully, that was not the case.

"Mm. I'll need your help, how much manpower do you have in the Dambrath Kingdom?" Leylin asked. Unless his background wasn't optimal, a near-legend like Tiff would have a certain amount of influence.

"I've created an organisation with faith in our Lord. There are fewer than 300 followers right now, and the highest ranked among them is a Baron..." Tiff clenched his teeth, and told Leylin unwillingly. The familiar soul suppression was too strong on him, and he had no choice but to speak the truth.

'An organisation in worship of me?' Leylin was pretty taken aback. 'To sustain a miniature organisation without the support of divine power... He has a lot of potential...'

The difference between true and false gods was that one could

grant their priests divine spells and other powers, ranging in ranks from rank 1 to rank 9. With the great power separating their planes and the prime material plane, the highest rank of spell a powerful devil or demon could bestow upon their worshippers was rank 5. Anything past that would require a blood sacrifice to go through, or have some other such restriction. This type of worship of false gods would suffer a unanimous crackdown by the true gods.

Demigods were similar. Without enough power to grant high-ranked spells to their followers, they were not widely spread. The Feathered Snake God, Kukulcan, that Leylin had made up previously was an otherworldly demigod who was still in deep sleep! He would not be able to grant even a rank 1 spell.

Leylin felt a special respect for the fact that Tiff could still sustain worship for Kukulcan under conditions like these, to the extent of enticing a baron. While he'd have used his own methods for it, it was still rather amazing.

‘But I can’t let this situation continue for too long... I’ll soon have to give them some hope!’ Leylin decided. A god that was unable to respond to prayers and grant spells would be eliminated like Beelzebub sooner or later.

‘If his original form is still recovering from his injuries, it doesn’t make sense for me to confer divine spells in his stead!’ Leylin’s original form as a near rank 7 Magus was from another world after all, and the World Will of the World of Gods was hostile towards his power. Not to mention the amount of energy that would be consumed by crossing the crystal sphere shell. If he were to use his original form to bestow divine spells, he would quickly go

bankrupt and even die.

‘The only way is to advance to become a Legend is the and condense my divine force. By doing that, I’ll have the most basic capability to respond to my followers.’ Leylin gritted his teeth.

“Devout follower of our Lord, Tiff! I have something for you to do. Let us meet at the capital city of the Dambrath Kingdom.”

Chapter 871 - Fiancé

After listening to Leylin's declaration, Tiff glanced at him with a serious look. It resembled the sharp gaze of a hawk, as if he was trying to pierce through the defense of the divine power to see Leylin's true form.

"I follow my God's will!" Tiff disappeared into mid-air after finished his sentence, and everything that had just occurred seemed like an illusion.

'He has magic abilities similar to a Chosen of my original form, and he's a high-ranking ranger or thief...' Something flashed across Leylin's eyes as he headed back to Gloomwood Castle.

He wasn't worried in the least about having his identity leaked. After all, his divine powers were enough to keep everyone in the dark. Even if Tiff eventually found out that he was Leylin Faulen, he would be under the impression that Leylin had received favour from his original form and had divine powers bestowed upon him.

'Well, now that I have Tiff I can launch many of my plans...' Though it was already confirmed that Leylin would take over all of Beelzebub's followers, he still needed someone to take over the operation and carry out the work of a commander. It looked like Tiff was very suitable for that position.

Apart from being sufficiently powerful, he had good leadership abilities as well. If the conditions were right in the future, he wanted to nurture Tiff into his first pope.

“Pouring power into the natives, and allowing them to adapt and change into a form that is accepted in the World of Gods... This is a very good issue to pursue.” Leylin had a profound look in his eyes.

Through his short time with Tiff just now, Leylin had already learnt much from the energy that emitted off his body. It had given him a general direction for his plan to induct Magi into the World of Gods.

“This method of forcibly pouring power into a subject should have failed for sure. My success with Tiff was a fluke, and should be considered a rare case.” Given his experiments in various worlds, Leylin was sure of this, “Thus, I’ll still have to observe this specimen, and test how it will change under different circumstances...”

Leylin immediately ducked into an alleyway. When he reappeared, he had already returned to his appearance of a mercenary.

“Well, I guess I can only scare people with my divine form...” Leylin sighed and returned to the inn.

“I, Rafiniya, a high-ranked knight, successor of the way of the knight, pledge my life to fight against evil.”

Before he stepped into the door, the young female knight’s voice could already be heard and that gave Leylin an immediate migraine.

“What’s going on?” He walked in suspiciously before seeing a fully-armoured Rafiniya raising the knight sword in her hand in a pledge.

“Oh! Heavens! Ley you’re finally back!” Old Pam waved his hand at the side and said, “This lady knight here was all ready to fight upon hearing that there were traces of devil worshippers in the castle. No one was able to persuade her....”

Hera, who was standing beside Old Pam, couldn’t help but smile helplessly. As for Yalani, she had already had enough of everyone and escaped to her room.

“Don’t those devil followers run rampant at night? I want to rescue the innocent commoners from the hands of these devils! Ley, let’s do it together, shall we?” Rafiniya spoke righteously, but unfortunately she seemed to have grown more sensible, as she was ready to drag the powerful-looking Leylin along.

“My dear Miss...” Leylin was rendered speechless too, “Look at the time now, please rest soon!”

Honestly speaking, why would he go against his own men? Were Rafiniya to go alone, it would probably end up with him saving her instead of her saving the world. She just might have ended up repenting her choices from within the stomachs of those worshippers.

“Rest? The people of the city are currently suffering from the

devastation of devils and you want me to rest?” Rafiniya looked holy and staunchly declared, “None of you shall stop me!”

“Then, do you still remember the rule that all knights need to abide by? To keep their promises?” Leylin sat down, and even had the mood to ask the servants for a pot of red tea and some snacks. After all, he had been so busy the whole night that he ought to have some rest.

“Knight Commandment 54: I must comply with the contract and keep my promises and oaths!” Rafiniya was rather familiar with that.

“Good! So don’t forget, you’re still under Hera for now!” Leylin wiped his lips gracefully with the napkin, “What if your employer decided to leave the castle tomorrow?”

“That’s right! Rafiniya, I’ll be leaving tomorrow to head towards the Dambrath Kingdom!” Hera caught on to Leylin’s acting real quick and continued the show and spoke meekly, “You won’t abandon me and my sister, would you?”

“I-” Rafiniya froze, the two knightly virtues of defending the just and keeping her promises circling her mind. She looked very conflicted.

Hera only managed to thank Leylin after they’d managed to send Rafiniya back to her room, “This is all thanks to you, Ley! If not I’m really afraid of what Rafiniya would have done.”

“Don’t mention it, I wanted to leave earlier too. After all, anything that has the least bit of contact with the devils will always be problematic..” Leylin was speaking against his conscience, but it received agreements from both Hera and Old Pam. The horrible image of the devils had long been deeply ingrained into the minds of commoners by the gods.

This was especially true of Hera, Hera who decided to give up on her original plans to rest. There were still many cities they could rest in on the way, and they didn’t necessarily have to stay here and deal with the devils. Even if Leylin hadn’t mentioned it first, Hera had plans of leaving earlier.

“Then, I guess, goodnight everyone! We’re leave here tomorrow, as soon as possible!” Leylin rose to bid them all goodnight, but he was smiling in his heart. Due to his interception, the activities of the devil followers had already been stopped. However, he didn’t have to mention that to them.

.....

The next day, a well-supplied mercenary team hit the road. Rafiniya sat alone on Nick and led the way with a sulky expression on her face. Hera and the others were sensible enough to not disturb her.

Hera seemed to have learnt her lesson and did not hire any more mercenaries. She only found a more down-to-earth horsekeeper and a horse carriage. It seemed as if she had placed all of her trust and safety in Leylin.

“After we pass Gloomwood Castle, we will reach the central plains of Dambrath Kingdom, which is also the most important agricultural base. The king has gathered most of the military force here and the security of this place is generally great.”

Honestly, Leylin thought that if the sisters were bold enough, it would be completely safe to continue the journey with just a few servants. But they were evidently shocked by the ogres previously, and would rather raise the commission than leave Leylin’s side.

“But to be able to hire a high-ranked knight and a rank 10 wizard with this price, it’s still considered not bad.” Leylin didn’t have any other opinions. He didn’t feel pressed for time currently. After all, whatever plans he’d left behind were enough to stall those paladins for a long time.

It was definitely impossible for the devil worshippers to face up against paladins, but they could indeed admirably fulfil the task of delaying them without showing any traces of themselves. This was sufficient time for Leylin to reach the Dambrath Kingdom with no worries, and he could even start planning his next step with ease.

Thus, he was currently in a relaxed state and even had the mood to tease Rafiniya. Wasn’t it the duty of a devil to push a pure and resolute person to hell? Though Leylin only held the memories of an Archdevil, he wouldn’t mind giving it a try.

As expected, everything was like what Leylin had predicted. After entering the central plains, the security of the surroundings

became much better and they could see little villages along the sides of the roads. There were even standby guards and patrolling militia.

Large-scaled bandit organisations would not be able to survive here. As for ogres and other dangerous beasts? They were wiped out by the king's men long ago. The only few exceptions that Leylin and gang met were small-scaled bandit groups with fewer than 20 members. Even Old Pam could face them, not to mention Rafiniya.

Days later, the outline of a huge city started showing in the horizon.

“We’re finally here! Dambrath’s capital!” Hera pulled the curtain of the carriage to the side, and excitement filled her eyes. If not for Leylin and the rest, she and her younger sister might have already died on their way here.

“Dambrath Kingdom, it is rumoured that the first generation king killed an evil dragon along with his followers and distributed the earnings from the dragons to the commoners. From then on, he built a city and developed it into a kingdom.”

Rafiniya couldn't help but show signs of admiration, yet Leylin found it funny. Stories that praised kings like these were nothing out of the ordinary, their sole purpose to make these kings seem more divine and lawful. Well, those civil servants could say anything they wanted, but Leylin would not believe a single word they said.

“Killing an evil dragon? This isn’t even an environment that dragons favour...” But obviously, no one cared nor did they hear Leylin’s grumbles. Even Yalani peeped her head out of the carriage to check out the surroundings, and listened to Rafiniya’s story with glee.

After they’d all reached the capital, Hera brought the horse to an aristocratic area on the east and they arrived in front of a prestigious mansion,

“We were able to reach the capital safely all thanks to you guys! Thank you for all of your protection along the way, my fiancé and I will definitely repay you!” Suddenly, the normally quiet Yalani spoke up, with a trace of arrogance on her face.

Chapter 872 - Contempt

“Ohoh... Fiancé? Hera, you actually brought your sister here to get married?” Rafiniya was the first to shout, her eyes seemingly full of stars, “Gallant adventurers protecting the beautiful princess, who has come to the imperial capital to meet her prince. There’s nothing more romantic than this...”

Pam and Leylin said their congratulations, making Yalani blush a little, but Leylin was rather flabbergasted. He had thought that this journey revolved around Hera, but who would have thought that the final lead was actually Yalani, the young lady who hadn’t even reached adulthood yet?

‘Plus, her elder sister is the one sending her off to get married? Such a tradition doesn’t seem to exist in the kingdom. Did something happen to their elders?’ Leylin could sense that something was not right.

Seeing the mercenaries make a racket in front of them, the two bodyguards standing at the gate of the mansion could no longer hold themselves back. “What are you doing? Don’t you know that this is the viscount’s residence?”

A bodyguard walked out. He was wearing a brand new set of armor, wiped so conscientiously that it was shining without a single speck of dust on it. He towered over Leylin and his company, his eyes filled with disdain.

The reputation mercenaries held in the imperial city was only

slightly better than that of bandits and gangsters. They were never a synonym of law-abiding citizens, and the nobles even loathed having any sort of relation to them. It would be so embarrassing!

As for the fiancé and so on? The bodyguard sized up Hera and her sister, who were dressed plainly, and evidently chose not to believe them. Yalani tugged at the hem of her elder sister's skirt, then turned to look at her own clothes. Her family wasn't very well off to begin with, and they had encountered huge misfortune. After a long and arduous journey on foot, even their best clothing would look like beggars' rags.

She and her sister now looked like unsophisticated girls from the countryside, entering the city for the first time.

The young lady lowered her head, and practically wanted to bury her head underground. "Young sir..."

Hera was flushed red, but could only pick herself up and negotiate. "I'm from Emon City..."

She simultaneously took out a small cloth bundle that she treasured. Peeling it open layer by layer, she revealed the medal of a noble family that was in good condition. Perhaps it was the effect of the badge; the bodyguard glanced at Hera before taking the badge in to inform others, even if he was still doubtful.

Leylin and his company waited in the wind for more than half an hour. Rafiniya had grown rather impatient by the time the entrance to the viscount's mansion finally opened slowly.

Someone who looked like a butler walked out, his face plastered with a professional smile.

“May I know who is the young miss from the Lanta family?” Hera inhaled deeply and walked forward, with a smile to please. “I’m Hera Lanta! She’s my sister, Yalani!”

This was their reality: they had no choice. She and her younger sister had no one to rely on in the imperial city, and they could only attach themselves to Yalani’s viscount fiancé if they wanted a good life. They couldn’t leave a bad impression on the butler whom he trusted as well.

“Respected young ladies, please follow me in. The viscount is waiting for you!” The butler bowed at the side.

“Also... They are the mercenaries I hired. I was able to make it safely to the imperial city all thanks to them...” Hera looked over at Leylin and the rest and explained herself.

“Mercenaries?!” Disdain was apparent in the butler’s eyes, and only Rafiniya, who was riding a warhorse, made him do a double take. “But the viscount only mentioned two ladies...”

“Hera, you guys head in first! We’ll just wait a while longer at most...” Leylin smiled as he said to Hera. He glanced at the scornful look in the butler’s eyes, and inwardly smiled to himself. “This expression... Does he treat Hera and her sister like poor relatives who came knocking because they ran out of money? Interesting, interesting!”

Leylin magnanimously forgave the butler's offense because he was watching a show. He even pulled Rafiniya back, someone whose expression showed that she had a belly full of anger, leaving her with no one to vent it on. Leylin was laughing so hard to himself that his stomach was about to start cramping.

Hera sent him an appreciative look, then took her sister's hand as she walked into the entrance.

"Ley, look at them! That expression!" Rafiniya's hair was completely about to explode, like an enraged kitten. "Ahh... I can't take it. At worst, I won't take the commission this time..."

"You don't have to take it if you don't want to, but don't drag the rest of us down..." Leylin's sarcastic blows at the side met with Old Pam's common sentiments. His eyes went watery. "Missy! You can't let poor Old Pam leave without a salary..."

"You haven't gotten your salary? Just the mere ogre ears we got on the way should be enough of a profit..." Rafiniya mumbled to herself, but her temper did not flare up.

In actual fact, Hera and her sister didn't have many assets to begin with. The two announced that they would raise the commission on the way, but after half the journey their group was stunned; the amount of cash they had on them was not even enough to pay what they'd promised before!

Furthermore, they hadn't paid half of the coachman's

commission and the fee for the carriage at the Gloomwood Castle!

Although Rafiniya didn't give a hoot about that little sum of money, she couldn't not care about the others. After hearing what Leylin and Old Pam said, she could only walk away while fuming. "Anyway, I won't demand the money, you guys can split it among yourselves..."

"Oh, Rafiniya! You're really the most kindhearted lady in the world!" The dwarf, Old Pam, immediately cheered. Even the coachman at the side revealed a smile. He had gained a deeper understanding about this strange team of mercenaries after spending time with them.

Rafiniya didn't lack money at all, and neither did the mysterious Ley. The only remaining people who would split the money would be him and Old Pam. People of the lower class never once minded having an extra share, even if it was just a few copper coins.

Clang! The main door swung open once again. Yalani's arm was hooked onto a young nobleman's, while Hera and the butler were standing behind them.

"These the mercenaries you employed? There's even a dwarf? I think joining a circus would be more suitable for it... Oh, right, have you seen the the Golden Dwarf Circus?" This youthful nobleman had a wan face and very dark eyebags, making him look like a person whose body had been wasted entirely on wine and women. He appeared very depressed, and completely disregarded Leylin and company, turning around to chat with Hera instead.

“Daniel, Rafiniya and Leylin are both extremely powerful Professionals...” Hera smiled cordially as she began to turn the nobleman’s attention to Leylin and the others. “I believe that they’ll be of help to you if you win them over...”

Although she had started to notice that Daniel was harbouring malicious intentions, Hera still tried as much as possible to indirectly make her point, even though this made Rafiniya shoot a resentful look at her. She was indeed trying her best to ‘help’ Leylin and the others from the bottom of her heart.

Rafiniya aside, the only way out for civilian Professionals was to wait upon a noble family. This way, if they did great service decades later, they might be able to receive their master’s favour, and obtain the position of an honorary knight or a lord.

With this, they would be able to seek a piece of territory and gain a hereditary title. From then on, they would have entered the ranks of the upper class. In actual fact, that was how Leylin’s grandfather started out, just that the person he had vowed his loyalty to was the king.

“Hm... You’re right!” Viscount Daniel couldn’t help but swallow a mouthful of saliva as he stared at Hera’s full bosom. As compared to his fiancée, who was still a young girl, her sister was evidently a much more mature woman. Of course, it would be perfect if he could have both of them.

Under the beauty’s pleading, Daniel finally looked at them in the

eye reluctantly as he sized them up. “You are very lucky. I, Viscount Daniel, am willing to accept all of you as my followers. Kneel and swear an oath!

“And you! You can be my honorary knight, my personal one...” When his gaze fell on Rafiniya, Daniel’s eyes clearly got brighter, and his eyes lingered for a little longer on her slender thighs. His butler, however, was trying his best to bite his lips, and didn’t say anything.

He understood his young master’s character very well, and knew that he would absolutely turn a deaf ear to any advice. But how could he promise to take them in as followers so easily, especially when there was also a dwarf and a coachman in their party?

However, the young master would regret his decision after a few days at most, and give them a random position as a guard or a servant or something. They would be satisfied anyway.

Even if they were servants, people in the viscount’s mansion were a notch higher than average civilians! This was an established theory in the butler’s mindset.

“What? Aren’t you going to quickly thank the viscount for his grace?” Hera signalled at Leylin and the others with her eyes.

She thought that she had found the best way out for these mercenaries. After all, compared to living a life of brushes with death, what was so bad about being a nobleman’s subordinate?

It was an unavoidable fact that although she was sharp-witted, she had a rigid mind. Or perhaps this was the way nobles thought.

“Mighty master, I, Pollan, hereby swear that...” What exceeded her expectations was that Rafiniya, Leylin and even Old Pam did not move an inch, only the coachman leapt forward with bright eyes.

“We are extremely grateful for your kindness, distinguished viscount. Unfortunately, I do not have any intention to serve a noble family. We are here just to settle our commission...”

“You all...” Hera was flushed with anger. This was the first time she felt hateful towards Leylin. How dare he decline her good intentions? Did he not know that there was a world of difference between a noble and a civilian?

Even Rafiniya frowned at this move, not appreciative of Hera’s ‘kindness’. Now that she thought herself to be the mistress of the viscount’s mansion, Leylin’s actions instantly made her feel like her pride had been hurt.

Chapter 873 - Imperial Capital

‘Interesting! Her change in status actually brought about such a huge change in her mentality so quickly?’ Leylin found it meaningful that the sisters had begun to change so quickly, despite being of the same status as them a little while ago. The mere change in their status made these two sisters act in such an unfamiliar way.

As they required Leylin’s protection on their journey, they had chatted with him in an amiable manner. But now that they had reached the imperial capital and had someone to rely on they drew the line, dividing their position and social class in the blink of an eye.

Leylin used Beelzebub’s memories to analyse most of her thoughts in a flash.

‘Excellent. Such an interesting soul will be the best candidate to corrupt and degrade into a devil... A vain heart...’ Just as Leylin was considering whether he needed to corrupt her, the rightful master, Viscount Daniel, finally spoke. “Hmm, if that’s the case, then forget it. Give them a sum of money and make them leave quickly. What would others think if they saw them?”

“Yes, young master!” The butler standing behind Viscount Daniel tossed out a small bag of coins. “Take the money and get lost, you greedy vultures!”

“You...” Rafiniya instantaneously felt as though she could no

longer recognise her her close friend, and suddenly became dispirited.

“Let’s go...” As she patted her mount’s head, Nick immediately let out a whinny, while Leylin scratched his nose and followed behind Old Pam, who had picked up the bag of money.

Viscount Daniel’s voice could be heard faintly as they left. “Why would you bother with those country bumpkins. Hera, Yalani, let me take you to...”

.....

“Repulsive! Abominable! Why did Hera and Yalani turn out this way? Did they fall under the spell of a devil that took control of their hearts?” The young female knight finally yelled after they had walked a distance.

“Alright. These nobles are all revolting. Old Pam has seen it all. Only gold never lies!” Rafiniya was totally speechless at his greed for money, and could only roll her eyes after hearing what he said. Leylin, on the other hand, asked interestedly, “Why didn’t you just swear to become his follower right away? He’s a nobleman after all!”

“If I did that, the elders would kill me! Besides, do you think a dwarf will be conferred a title in a human country?” Old Pam winked, exposing his innate cunning self, “Old Pam would rather than drown in rum than slog his guts out for a noble and end up with nothing...”

“Haha... You are a clever dwarf indeed...” Rafiniya was still a young lady after all, and was immediately amused by his humorous tone...

Leylin was the first to suggest disbanding when they reached a crossroad. “If there isn’t anything else, should we part ways here?”

“Part ways? Aren’t we going to get paid for the mission at the mercenary association?” Rafiniya was surprised, and also a little reluctant for some reason.

“I have other things to do.” Leylin declined tactfully, but even Rafiniya could read between the lines: he wanted to be alone. Once she understood this, she even had the urge to cry.

“Then... where will you be going?” The young female knight still asked stubbornly.

“I intend to stay in the imperial capital for a period of time, then begin my journey once again. My objective is not clear yet, perhaps I will make a trip to Silvermoon City up north. Goodbye...” Leylin seemed as though he was waving elegantly as he left.

But Rafiniya and Old Pam did not realise that a gloomy thread of light had already wound itself around Rafiniya’s body like a strand of hair, one that disappeared almost instantly.

‘The mark of a devil. I look forward to the moment when your

soul falls from grace...' The low mutter of a devil sounded in Leylin's heart.

There were a few reasons he occasionally did right by Rafiniya and the others. For one thing, they were his group and saving them was a matter of course, but another reason was to observe the souls of people and attempt to corrupt them.

Leylin wasn't a masochist. Why would he insist on waiting outside the viscount's mansion otherwise? Did he lack that small sum of money? It was only at the actual scene that he could grasp the most subtle undulations of the soul and guide it!

'From the looks of it, Hera and her sister have been consumed by vanity. With just a slight push, it would be perfectly normal for them to be lured in by the devil. Rafiniya, on the other hand, has the purest soul. Once she's corrupted, she will possess strength that will make all the other devils drool...'

Once a soul like Rafiniya's fell from grace, it would be extremely enticing for any formidable devil. However, Leylin was already a near Archdevil, and he naturally didn't have to resort to such unclassy behaviour. It was out of prudent consideration that he decided to personally make a trip down to experiment on average human souls.

Since his main body had already robbed Beelzebub of all it had, having dealings with the underworld and other devils would be unavoidable. Even Leylin himself had a few devilish characteristics.

Souls in the World of Gods were different from those of the Magus World after all, and Leylin had to personally verify this matter. When he was in the outer seas, the people of his family were unsuitable to experiment on. As for those pirates, their souls were even similar to those of devils wreaking havoc!

Only Rafiniya and the others made Leylin's eyes light up. This was precisely why he left made the mark of a devil on her, making it convenient for him to track and monitor her at any time.

.....

‘All of these other matters can be put to one side. There are even more important matters to attend to on this trip to the imperial capital!’

The first problem that Leylin had to resolve was to cleanse himself of any suspicions of his piracy. Otherwise, the priests and paladins of the God of Justice would always follow him like houseflies, which was impossible for him to defend against. Even if he destroyed one group, others would emerge to come after him.

However, both Leylin and the nobles were very skilled when it came to distorting the truth and covering up evil deeds.

‘It's simple in theory. As long as His Majesty makes a statement to conclude the case, it will be sufficient! After confirming the murderer, even the church of the God of Justice would be unable to continue investigating...’

Leylin was very clear on the fact that he currently was not considered a suspect. Even the priests and paladins of the God of Justice could only 'seek his assistance in their investigation' at the very most.

However, if they really did so, it would be all over for him! Which noble didn't have a crime penalty tied to them, or wasn't implicated in a grey area? Once a single event was uncovered, it would be linked to even more. He wouldn't even be able to think of walking out of the church alive at the end of it all.

His only path was to nip this in the bud; the church's hand was reaching too far.

'Once the king makes his final conclusion, it will be difficult for even the church to overthrow it. After all, they must respect the royalty in this region. The network of connections that the Faulen Family has is insufficient for this...'

Leylin was in deep thought. 'It would be best if a member of his majesty's inner ministerial circle spoke on my behalf, and he would have to be a very important person. The network that Beelzebub left behind would probably come in handy in this aspect...'

The higher one's status as a noble, the easier one would become corrupted and collaborate with the devil. The same happened to the king of Dambrath, and even the person in charge that Beelzebub had personally appointed himself before he entered

dormancy. It was undeniably a form of mockery towards the gods.

‘Let me see... In the list of names of the chiefs in charge in the Dambrath region, the one situated in the Dambrath Kingdom’s capital is...’ Leylin browsed through the information that the A.I. Chip had recorded. An odd smile gradually crept onto his face. ‘Interesting... A devil?’

In Beelzebub’s memory, the imperial capital of Dambrath was obviously the main disaster area where devils wrecked havoc. He had even specially dispatched a devil over for the convenience of control.

Although she was suppressed by the prime material plane, she should still have the strength of a high-ranked Professional. She had even mastered a few special concealment techniques to help Beelzebub’s believers successfully avoid countless searches by the churches.

“A smart chap,” Leylin evaluated her indifferently. If Leylin had used his true strength to subdue her, then the outcome of the fight wouldn’t even need to be considered. Unfortunately, fairness didn’t exist in such matters from the start.

With Beelzebub’s memories, Leylin had control over a trump card that could instantly make him an archenemy!

“But before I subdue her, I’ll go meet an old friend!” A strange smile flashed across Leylin’s face.

.....

“Damn it! Damn it! Those loathsome nobles all have their eyes on my territory, and have completely forgotten about their friendship with the Golden Thornblossoms...” Also in the imperial capital was Leylin’s old acquaintance. Viscount Tim had returned from the imperial palace, crestfallen.

Being a spy, he’d fortunately escaped the unforeseen event of the Pirates’ Tide, and had even brought a portion of the family’s wealth to the mainland. Soon after, he began to take action in the imperial capital in hopes of obtaining the title of Marquis of the Gold Thornblossom family, as well as the territories in the Baltic archipelago.

However, reality had slapped him in the face. Once the old marquis had passed away, his original relationships had all become invalid. Those nobles of the imperial capital with their insatiable appetites had started planning to split up the Baltic archipelago; the profits from oceanic trade were enough to make these nobles go green with envy.

After multiple trips to the palace to meet with the king, he realised that His Majesty also seemed unenthusiastic about his requests.

‘Although we are blood relatives, the benefits are irresistible to others. Unless someone with real authority is willing to support me... I didn’t bring a lot of gold coins, who should I choose...’ Just as Viscount Tim was pondering over that, a servant entered to ask for instructions. “Sir, there’s another noble requesting to see you.

He displayed the Faulen Family's badge..."

Ping! The exquisite porcelain cup in Viscount Tim's hand fell onto the floor right away.

"The Fau... Faulens!" Tim covered his forehead. "Is he still not going to let me off?"

In his heart, there was no difference between Leylin and other demons and devils. Ironically, that was indeed the truth.

Chapter 874 - Truename

After much consideration, Tim still gave the command. “Let him in!” He met Leylin with a solemn and tragic expression on his face, and was startled by the youthful face before him.

“This is the first time we have met, Viscount Tim. However, we have already made many deals in the past. I’m Leylin, Leylin Faulen. Pleased to meet you.”

“Get out, all of you!” Tim rudely chased his subordinates out, and fiercely shut the door and windows. Leylin was even considerate enough to add a magical protective screen.

“I’ve already done as you requested. Why have you still come here?” Tim asked in a rage, but Leylin could still see the fear and weakness under his tough and unyielding expression.

“Don’t take offense, alright? After all, we had a really pleasant time working together before, didn’t we Viscount Tim?” Leylin said with a light smile.

“You damn bandit, you absolute savage...” The veins on Tim’s face bulged grotesquely, “Aren’t you afraid I’ll inform on you to the king and the church?”

“What do I have to be afraid of?” Leylin laughed exaggeratedly, then whispered next to Tim’s ear, “After all, the person who killed the old marquis wasn’t me!”

Once the words left Leylin's mouth, Tim immediately curled up on his seat and started crying bitterly, as though his spine had been ripped out of him. "It's you guys! You guys forced me..."

"No one forced you... If you came clean to the old marquis, both of you could have fled before the pirates came..." Leylin sneered. "Also, you don't have to make yourself look pitiful in front of me. You really should hire a new acting teacher."

The cold look in Leylin's eyes told Tim that the wizard had seen through him.

"If that's the case, then why did you still come and look for me?" Tim took out a napkin to wipe the tears on his face. He calmed down in an instant, and his expression was even gloomy.

"Haha... Good! That's the person I want to negotiate with!" Leylin clapped his hands, "Of course, the same as last time. A deal!"

"A deal? Speak!" Tim wasn't even half as timid as earlier.

"I will help you obtain your title and territory, and in exchange you will end all suspicion on me." Leylin was very direct. Tim was the key person in his plan to cleanse himself of suspicion. After all, if even the victim proved Leylin to be innocent, what else could anyone say?

“End all suspicion? Tsk tsk... Seems like the investigation team of the God of Justice is giving you trouble!” Tim folded his arms in front of his chest.

“Just a little, but you can forget about haggling. I have many other options as well, just that things would become a bit more troublesome. But the only person in the entire imperial capital who can support you in your obtaining a title of nobility is me!” Leylin appeared extremely enigmatic.

“I need to see what you’re capable of,” Tim did not agree at once. The Faulen Family’s head was just a baron after all, and Tim did not believe that his influence would extend beyond the outer seas.

“You’ll soon see!” With an indifferent smile, Leylin got up to leave.

Now was the time to utilise the devil network. Leylin made turns here and there in the imperial capital, as though he was just strolling around, and finally arrived at an entertainment club.

“Young master, we are not open yet...” The doorman said awkwardly. Leylin examined his surroundings. This place was evidently a street filled with the entertainment facilities of the imperial capital. There were similar buildings all around, just that the streets were rather deserted; after all, not every noble was so idle as to come over to play around in the day.

“I know...” Leylin stretched his right hand open in front of the doorman. A bizarre magic pattern appeared in the centre of his

palm: a thorny rose. The colour of its petals changed continuously as time elapsed.

The doorman's face changed drastically upon seeing this mark. "Come in with me!" he said as his aura changed, and his languid gaze brightened up greatly. After vigilantly glancing around Leylin's surroundings, he opened the main door and let Leylin in.

Pink veils greeted him everywhere when he entered through the main door. There was a strong scent of perfume here, and wine bottles and scented handkerchiefs were strewn across the floor. A smooth arm or sleek thigh would peek out from the cracks of the doors from time to time. The entire place was filled with an exotic atmosphere.

The doorman led Leylin to the deepest corner of the club straight away, into a hidden private room.

"Let me meet with the person in charge!" Leylin no longer bothered to conceal his identity. His eyes turned blood red, and he emitted traces of the aura of the devil.

"Yes, sir!" The doorman performed a ceremony exclusive to followers of the devil, and retreated respectfully. He even seemed to be trembling as he could distinctly sense the aura of a powerful devil radiating from Leylin.

The boss arrived swiftly. The devilish undulations radiating from her made Leylin smile.

“Oh! Handsome young master, were you looking for me?” A relaxed voice said. Leylin then saw a beautiful and alluring lady enter the private room.

She was clothed in a crimson evening gown, which revealed half of her snowy white shoulders. Her eyes were glistening as she coquettishly entered the room. With a gentle tap of her right foot, the door of the private room closed slowly. As she shut the door, the high slit in the hem of her gown inadvertently revealed her smooth thigh, as well as her pretty little feet and her toenails that were painted with daffodil juice.

She didn't seem to be wearing anything under her luxurious clothes, and she radiated an aura which was infinitely tempting.

‘A rare creature!’ This was the first thought that came to Leylin's mind. She was even more attractive than that fox lady, Madam Tillen, whom he had met previously. She was an already-extinct Creature that could make men go crazy.

“It's me!” Leylin looked her up and down without even bothering to be polite. Her clean, bare feet that stood upon the carpet were especially attractive and flirtatious. However, what he said made her face change drastically in a split second. “As expected of a high-ranked pleasure devil, one that graces the beds of men...”

“A pleasure devil? Are you joking, young man?” The beautiful lady covered her mouth demurely, and even appeared a little pale. This was a natural reaction that normal people would give after hearing about a devil.

“No need for this pretense. Since I know about this place, it means that I already know everything about you that there is to know, including your real identity...” With a flick of Leylin’s hand, a magical barrier formed immediately. Shadowy divine force suddenly erupted from his body.

“Master’s divine force!” This fake divine force made the attractive lady across him cry out in surprise. It was as though her fog of disguise had been pierced, revealing her true form. The amorous smile persisted, but her pupils had turned a strange burgundy. Her violet hair was topped with a curved horn characteristic of devils, and she appeared charming and adorable. Her feet had also turned into a pair of cloven hooves.

A layer of strange purple runes appeared on her body. They were like tattoos on her skin, yet they had a bizarre charm to them. Although one would recognise her as a devil with one look, she was more attractive than before.

“So you’re the divine one that appeared in Gloomwood Castle: Kukulkan!”

The pleasure devil looked at Leylin restrainedly, fear showing on her changed appearance. As the priest in charge of the entire Dambrath Kingdom, she’d certainly paid close attention to Leylin’s appearance then. The worshippers from Gloomwood Castle wouldn’t dare hide anything from her either.

If not caring about costs, she could receive news rapidly from

across the kingdom.

“Yes, it’s me!” Leylin had his hands behind his back, and seemed extremely mysterious. His divine force was suppressing the devil opposite him.

“Are you here to add me to your party? Hehe... What a pity, but without master’s orders, I will not comply with you.” The pleasure devil watched Leylin with vigilance. As a high-ranked devil, she had personally seen Beelzebub before, and knew that he was absolutely impossible that it would bestow his divinity on other devils.

“I’m afraid that’s not for you to choose, Lady Delia! Or perhaps I should call you... Adelius Dodocrow Menjfakel Anconina...” Leylin uttered a string of complex and tongue-twisting syllables. When the pleasure devil heard this, she immediately turned wild.

“How... How did you know?” Her expression changed drastically. With a wave of her hand, a powerful magic force appeared in the private room once again, similar to a large-scale confinement spell formation.

The reason why Lady Delia was so anxious was entirely because Leylin had just uttered her truename. A truename that was reserved for devils!

High-level devils had unique truenames, and these were their greatest secret. They were almost as important as their lives! Once it was divulged, even ordinary wizards would be able to easily

imprison them, and enslave them or boss them around!

As the Sovereign King of Gluttony who had control over her, it was only natural that Beelzebub knew the truename of this pleasure devil, and could cast a deadly curse on her at any time. This was the greatest form of control he had.

Leylin, who had stripped Beelzebub of everything he owned, had obtained the truenames of all the devils Beelzebub controlled from his memories. It was this trump card that he counted on.

“Why? Do you want to hit me?” Leylin smiled weakly. The rune representing Lady Delia’s truename had already flown into his palm. His terrifying divine force was like a vicious dragon, ready to smash the rune into pieces at any moment.

“No! Don’t!” The pleasure devil cried out in alarm, and knelt on the floor. “I am willing to obey your orders, master!”

As a devil, she would of course treasure her life. As for loyalty and moral principles, they had long been fed to the dogs.

Chapter 875 - Strategy

“Good! I won’t deprive you of your position, but you must use all the resources you have to assist me.” Leylin glanced at the pleasure devil in front of him and nodded indifferently. With Beelzebub’s divine force and knowledge of her truenam e, this devil would even agree if Leylin said he was a reincarnation of the Sovereign King of Gluttony.

With her life under a threat, it was not difficult to make requests of her.

“How vast are your connections? Can you influence the king?” Leylin asked bluntly.

“Master, I secretly have control over around a thousand followers. Two are earls, and five are viscounts... I can also indirectly affect two marquises and a duke...” Delia immediately reported to him. Beelzebub was completely ignored by the two of them, such is the sad fate of the loser.

“Only Marquise Louise can influence the king. She is the king’s lover, and his newest conquest.” The pleasure devil bit at her lips, looking very seductive. In order to survive and gain higher status, she did not mind using her own body. Hence, after the scare, she still unwittingly displayed her beauty in front of Leylin.

She was very confident. No matter how resolute a human was, they wouldn’t be able to resist her charms.

“Marquise Louise?” Leylin was astounded. He had not expected this devil to be so effective as to influence the highest class of the kingdom.

Madam Delia finally explained how it was done to Leylin. Like other devils, she first used her pleasure house to attract nobles, and tempted them into their falls. Shady methods had allowed her to gain control of a large number of noble families’ madams and ladies.

Making use of these social nobles, she frequently held dinner parties for the fallen, attracting even more to join. This network was like a virus that constantly expanded.

Recently, Madam Delia herself had personally guided the Marquise, Madam Louise, to try out some forbidden pleasures and successfully captured her. She had become devil worshipper and was even sent to the bed of the king.

Delia herself had the true body of a devil, and it was impossible for her to bypass all the detection methods and the wizards inside the court. However, it wasn’t an issue for pure humans.

“I now have control over a batch of noble ladies, and they are all followers of the master. If you like them...” Madam Delia licked her lips, sending him an invitation that was very attractive.

“If I’m free in the future, I’ll give it a try...” When it came to such a sweet invitation, Leylin did not hesitate to accept. He did have these needs usually anyway.

“Hehe... our services here will definitely satisfy you, master...” After hearing Leylin’s promise, Madam Delia seemed to feel relieved. At the very least, while she still had value, Leylin would not get rid of her. Her entire body relaxed, which only made her seem more charming.

After understanding the power she held, Leylin nodded and sat on a couch nearby.

“Have you heard of Viscount Tim from the Baltic archipelago?”

“Him?” Delia shot Leylin a glance, seeming to be guessing at Leylin’s relationship with the person in question.

“I’ve heard of him. He used to be the commoner son in the Gold Thornblossom Family, and he’s scheming to get a position as the Marquis, as well as land...”

“What do you think are the chances of him succeeding?” Leylin laced his fingers together.

“There are many nobles hoping to obtain the Baltic archipelago. There is a marquis eyeing it, but the other party is the nephew of the king. While he did not do well and had his land attacked by pirates, that’s the problem with the previous marquis. His tragic story already earned him pity points, and I expect that he can get what he wants at the end. I’m not sure how much or what he’ll have to hand over in exchange though...”

Delia was a devil after all, and had also worked in the Dambrath Imperial Capital for many years. She, who had seen these power struggles countless times, could easily guess what would happen.

“Does master wish to help him?”

“No. Dispatch some of our people to make contact with him, but don’t give him anything too substantial... I’m sure you’re great at that...” Leylin stroked his chin.

“Dangling a carrot in front of a donkey’s eyes so he can see it but not eat it, and therefore get him to struggle hard in vain? Hehe... master, you’re terrible!” Madam Delia grinned brightly. Truth be told, devils were the best at using benefits to entice humans, unceasingly tightening the ropes around their necks or getting them to sell their souls.

“It’s good that you understand. Do this for now, I’ll inform you about other things in the future...” Leylin stood up, completely ignoring her astounding beauty and looking ready to leave.

“Master, aren’t you staying?” Madam Delia was truly surprised.

“No, I still have many things to do in the capital. I’ll come over whenever I have time...” Leylin always drew a clear line between work and pleasure.

Seeing this, Delia could only watch as Leylin left. Only after his

figure completely disappeared did she look grim, “Damn it! How could he have my master’s strength and know my true name? Just a look at him makes it obvious that he’s a steel-hearted freak who wouldn’t treat his underlings more leniently because of their beauty...”

It was the greatest misfortune of a pleasure devil to fall under such a master. However, with her truename in his grasp, Delia could do nothing else.

“Damn it. DAMN IT!” She could only begin to curse hatefully.

The other servants and dancers watched their boss fearfully. Only they knew what violence and darkness was hidden under her perfect and beautiful face. Hence, they all wished they could turn into ostriches, burying their heads in the ground.

Upon seeing this, she yelled even more violently. “You dwarf swines, get working! Do you want to get whipped?”

Days later, Leylin had changed into noble clothing and headed out of the church of wealth. Using the transfer services of the church, he’d received a large amount of gold from Faulen Island. Due to the fall of the Baltic archipelago, the family’s profits from trade had risen bit by bit, which gave Leylin even more abundant funds.

Wizard training could not be sustained without money. They needed it for their expensive experimental materials and magic tomes.

“Tim’s side has also surrendered. Everything is going well. I might go to the imperial capital and train for a while, since the Wizards’ Guild can give me access to any materials below that given to high-ranked wizards. With help from my connection with mentor Ernest...”

Leylin looked at the distant wizard tower that reached through the clouds, and his eyes couldn’t help but glint. His plans were going extremely smoothly. After seeing Leylin’s strength, Tim’s side had easily agreed to the deal.

After all, compared to what the other nobles could want from him, Leylin only needed Tim to confirm the deal and asked a low price. With Leylin having evidence of Tim having murdered the old marquis anyway, it was impossible for them to go their separate ways. Hence, as long as he was still in the outer seas, he would have to consider Leylin’s stance. After considering it comprehensively, Tim naturally knew what to choose.

With proof of harm, Leylin would just need to create a ruckus, forcing the king to make an announcement and with proper documentation, make everything official. What would the church of the God of Justice be able to do then?

“On top of that, even if the king finds out the truth in the future, he won’t acknowledge that this is the truth. He’ll stubbornly protect the legitimacy of his reputation. He represents the dignity of a kingdom, so how could the king announce something that might be wrong? For his own reputation, he would rather allow absurd events like this. Such is the sorrow of those with power...”

Leylin's lips quirked up into a cold smile.

Offending a king just for the son of a baron, who was only guilty of piracy and therefore less of an issue than associating with devils and demons? Was that worth it? The priests of the God of Justice would have to consider this properly.

With this done, Leylin, who was now considered clean, could revert to strutting around on the streets in his original appearance. Come to think of it, there was no crime pinned to him. At most, there were only suspicions.

“Now that I've shown my face outside the church of wealth, the others should emerge soon, right?” Leylin had never doubted the rate at which intel flowed between large organisations. After all, even Madam Delia had a huge intel network, much less the churches.

With the transfer of money at the shrine, his status, name and all other information were exposed.

“I'll be waiting!” Leylin chuckled and walked into the Wizards' Guild.

The Wizards' Guild was less cheery than the Thieves' Guild or Warriors' Guild, but in turn it was filled with a solemn, stately aura. Two magic puppets loyally guarded the place, emanating magic light. There were evidently spells of eternity cast on them.

‘With such an air of wealth and extravagance, as well as their expenses... It’s no wonder that there’s only one Wizards’ Guild in the Dambrath Kingdom.’

“Welcome! May I know which services you require?” A wizard apprentice received him and bowed towards him with etiquette that befitted wizards.

“I am Leylin Faulen of Faulen Island. I’m here to take the wizard ranking examination.” Leylin had a bright smile on his face.

If he planned to study in the Wizards’ Guild, he’d obviously need to have his rank verified. The rigour of this was far greater than what warriors underwent. He even had to make clear whom he’d learnt from before and what he’d studied. Wizards were a bunch of serious people!

However, Leylin was already prepared for this, and was therefore unafraid.

Chapter 876 - Black And White

Meribald was a 367 year old high-ranking wizard, although he preferred to be called a scholar. With the power of his magic, even at his age he was plenty vigorous, and had very supple skin as though he was a young man. Only his greying hair betrayed his age, but it seemed more like an accent to his wisdom and foresight.

He had served as president of the Wizards' Guild in the Dambrath Imperial Capital for over a hundred years, and had handled innumerable major events. He had also awarded numerous medals to talented wizards, and judged notorious ones. By now, he'd begun to think his still and unfeeling heart would no longer receive any blows.

He hadn't expected how stunned he would be today.

Meribald pushed his spectacles up, his finger brushing against the uneven imprints on the identification document. There was no problem with the magic imprint! That was what his abundance of experience was telling him, but he was horrified by what the results of his investigation meant.

"Proof of nobility! Wizard Ernest's testimonial! And the final round of examination of the documents didn't meet with any issues! In that case, this young noble, who is just sixteen years of age, is really a rank 10 wizard? In Azuth's name..." Meribald's jaw slowly dropped as he looked at the young man in front of him.

With such innate skill at his age... Meribald wondered whether

he was about to witness the birth of the kingdom's wizarding Legend.

“Excuse me, guild leader. Is there any problem?” The question raised by the young wizard across him shook Meribald from his reverie.

“Of... Of course not! Congratulations, wizard Leylin!” Meribald secretly sighed as he placed his magic imprint on the wizard ranking document. This document would be filed away as proof of Leylin's identity as a wizard.

“From today onwards, you are a mid-ranked wizard as verified by the Wizards' Guild! May Azuth bless you...” Although this was not the deity he believed in, Leylin still lowered his head respectfully to express his humility.

Meribald passed Leylin a wizard robe enhanced with a ‘Remove Dust’ spell and other coats of arms and documents. When conducting the ceremony, Meribald could see Leylin's love of magic and the pursuit of truth in his eyes; this same look once existed in his eyes when he was younger!

‘Perhaps only such a person will truly have the ability to break through into the realm of Legends, and become a being that I can only dream of...’ Meribald gasped in admiration to himself, a warm hearted expression on his face. He kindly gave some advice to Leylin as well. “Wizard Leylin! Although you have already entered the ranks of a mid-level wizard, I suggest that you study in the imperial capital's Wizards' Guild for a while. A few of the latest philosophies and models in magic are present here, and will be

very important for you right now.”

“That is precisely what I wish for, distinguished guild leader!” Leylin performed a wizard’s bow to the high-ranked wizard. His movements were unbelievably graceful.

‘I didn’t expect that things would get this troublesome. It seems like the talent I displayed made me quite outstanding. However, I can’t get the attention of the other guys without doing so...’ Leylin secretly gave a bitter laugh.

A sixteen-year-old rank 10 wizard! Such innate talent seemed rather horrifying. After verifying his rank, a few old fogeys immediately acted as though they had suffered a stroke, and even involved the guild leader.

Fortunately, he’d already earned his fame as a genius wizard. All of his improvements had been witnessed by Ernest, and it had saved him a lot of trouble. With regards to the Devilblood Dagger and other items that would easily be associated with evil, Leylin didn’t carry any of them with him.

‘Proof that I’m a rank 10 wizard. Even if I travel abroad, it’s enough for me to receive preferential treatment...; Leylin fiddled with the wizard insignia in his hand. It was decorated with a silver moon and stars, and there a sense of indistinct beauty to it. In addition, it was also bound to its wizard owner, and outsiders would absolutely be unable to make a counterfeit copy.

“Leylin Faulen!” A few men carrying the symbol of a high-level

inspector stood at the door of the wizard guild. A team of guards crowded around Leylin, intercepting him.

Leylin even saw a few priests of the God of Justice among the team, watching him with judgeful stares.

‘They’re only here now? It’s a little late... Or are they afraid of the power of the wizard guild?’

“Is anything the matter?” Leylin asked the inspector in front of him with a smile.

“You are suspected of a crime in the open seas. I need you to assist in our investigations!” The inspector said expressionlessly.

Judges, public security officers, policemen and the like all advocated righteousness, and were the main source of followers for the God of Justice. Leylin wouldn’t be surprised if they had the backing of the church of the God of Justice or if they were tipped off by them.

“If I say no?” Leylin looked at him ridiculously.

“You do not have the authority to reject!” With a wave of the inspector’s hand, a few guards immediately closed in.

“You...” Leylin gaze was as harsh as lightning, and he raised his voice by a few notches.

“Don’t tell me you dare to apprehend an innocent nobleman in the imperial capital? And slander a noble mid-ranked wizard in front of the wizard guild at that!”

Noble! Wizard! Once these two upper-class identities were revealed, many guards immediately retreated in fear.

In their plain and simple thoughts, this was definitely a struggle between influential powers. Why should they take part? Aren’t they afraid of getting into trouble for being involved?

After witnessing this scene, the inspector knitted his brows. But before he could take his next course of action, the intense sound of a horse’s hooves could be heard.

“His Majesty decrees that Leylin Faulen will enter the palace and have an audience with the King!” An imperial knight dressed in a splendid suit of armor dismounted his steed and displayed a document to the inspector with the king’s royal seal stamped on it. “His Majesty wishes to convene a legislative hearing with regards to this, and has specially gathered Viscount Tim to testify...”

For some reason, Leylin’s peaceful state gave the inspector a bad feeling. However, he couldn’t stop this from happening, or he would be declaring war on the law that he had vowed his loyalty and devotion to.

“You know... Even when things seem black and white, there will always be infinitesimal shades of grey existing between them. Isn’t

that right, Sir Inspector?” Leylin mounted the horse and taunted.

“Even with Viscount Tim bearing witness, His Majesty definitely will not let you off.” The inspector’s face changed drastically, but he eventually chose to have faith in the king.

“I’ll wait and see,” Leylin smiled lightly as he disappeared into the end of the road along with the knight.

“We’ll wait in front of the main entrance of the court. I don’t believe it...” The inspector bit his lip and waved his hand firmly. Evidently, the unease he felt had become stronger.

“What a pity... If Lorent and the others can reach in time...” The priest of the God of Justice sighed. “Even if that’s the case, the sinner must receive trial and punishment!”

.....

The events that followed progressed like a stage play. Numerous people appeared on stage one by one like marionettes at Leylin’s fingertips, and evil got the last laugh.

With the victim, Viscount Tim, testifying personally, as well as the instigation by Marquise Louise, when her husband was asleep, Leylin didn’t even need to open his mouth to speak. When it came to such matters, taking part in them himself would lead to a loss. He had to maintain the reserved and cold attitude of a noble.

The inspector's last trace of persistence was thoroughly smashed to smithereens with the king's single statement.

‘With regards to the murder of the Gold Thornblossom Marquis in the open seas, our investigations have confirmed it to be a crime committed by the pirate crew called the Barbarians. I hereby order the arrest of the leaders of the aforementioned, namely Odge and Tillen...’

“Why? Why did it turn out like this?” The inspector knelt on the floor with tears in his eyes as he began to sob silently.

“Because this was a misunderstanding to begin with! In actual fact, I’m proud of how the kingdom has such a responsible and diligent inspector like you...” Leylin happened to walk out at this moment, and saluted elegantly to the inspector upon hearing him. He had the attitude of a person who was trying to put a stop to the enmity between them with a smile.

There were now two more titles to his name. One was his identity as an imperial wizard, and the other was as an honorary viscount. They weren’t of much use, but they had a nice ring to it. He had received them after entertaining the king.

Even though the king used to be brilliant when he was younger, he was clearly addicted to wine and women at present. As long as it didn’t involve his authority and prestige, the king wouldn’t have any reaction. Leylin had his methods of handling such an old fellow.

What made him happier was that after this statement was issued in writing, no one else would give him trouble about the pirates. He could also conveniently hinder the Barbarians. What wasn't there to be happy about?

"Why..." Leylin smiled gracefully as he skillfully mingled with the circle of nobles in the imperial capital, and was even chatting cheerfully with Viscount Tim as if they were blood brothers. Seeing this, the inspector sunk completely into perplexity. At this moment, his faith was even in danger of being shattered.

"My child... Justice has always been lonely. The road of people persisting in justice is inevitably filled with thorns, but we believe that the ultimate victory will definitely belong to us!" The priest's warm hand landed on the inspector's shoulder, becoming his sole support.

'The God of Justice? Hmph!' Leylin's expression didn't change, but he sneered secretly to himself.

.....

Outside the imperial capital, Lorent and company could finally see the city walls after a challenging trek.

"We finally made it. According to our intelligence reports, he's in the city. He can't run away this time!" Lorent's face was filled with excitement, and also a little fury at the same time.

Previously in Gloomwood Castle, they had first been impeded by the matter regarding the devil worshippers. As compared to pirates, the movements of devil worshippers were obviously much more important. But after busying themselves with it, they discovered that it was a false alarm. Not only that, they had wasted a huge amount of time, and even let their original target get to the imperial capital!

Fortunately, with the church's information network, he had nowhere else to run to now.

“Prepare to accept punishment, Leylin Faulen!” Although they hadn't met, Lorente had already sketched an image of him in his heart: cunning, savage, and full of evil! This noble should have been burnt alive at the stake!

Chapter 877 - Visiting

“Hold up, Lorent!” The high-level priest in the team walked forward at this moment.

“What’s the matter?” Lorent furrowed his brows. The priest’s expression gave him a bad feeling.

“I got the latest news through a Sending spell. The king has already issued a statement: the Barbarians have been found guilty of setting loose the Pirates’ Tide on the open seas. With Viscount Tim as a direct witness, there’s no hope of saving this situation...” The priest was visibly upset, but still informed the others of the latest news.

“We can’t continue to investigate him as a subject. This mission must be abandoned.”

“Then our hard work? Those thousands of innocent lives lost at sea? Will it go to waste just like that?” Lorent seemed to burst into an indignant red-hot flame, and suddenly drew his sword and shattered an enormous boulder next to him into pieces.

“There is nothing we can do. We can’t go against the king’s authority directly...” The priest had a helpless expression on his face.

Although there would be no problem overturning the entire Dambrath Kingdom if the church of the God of Justice was mobilised, the crux of the matter was that the powers of the

church were spread across the entire mainland. It could not control the entire Dambrath kingdom.

Besides, the human kingdoms regarded the church overriding the king's authority as taboo. Success would only cause more problems than it gave benefits.

Other churches were also eyeing them covetously, like tigers stalking their prey. They wouldn't allow the church of justice to become the most powerful party here.

"Are we just going to let that noble escape his punishment?" Lorent's eyes were bloodshot.

"Of course not! The kingdom's statement represents His Majesty's pride, and we can't overthrow that of course. We can no longer accuse him of being a pirate, but we can search for other crimes..." The priest was very experienced in this aspect. After all, this was not the only noble family who had ever committed such deeds.

"However, we can't act against him for the time being. Let's carry out other missions first!"

"No! I want to stay here, and I won't go anywhere else until he admits to his crime!" The paladin said willfully. He was a bullheaded individual, and once he made up his mind, it would be impossible to hold him back.

The priest could only sigh helplessly upon seeing this.

.....

A luxurious carriage slowly came to a halt on the roadside.

“Here. Careful, it’s slippery!” Viscount Daniel was clothed in an extravagant suit. He alighted from the carriage, followed by Yalani and her sister Hera.

However, the pair of sisters were now dressed in splendid attire, and appeared very sweet and charming. Yalani blushed as she gazed at Daniel, her face lit with joy. This young girl was just fourteen years old, yet she had now lost her immaturity, and had the bearing of a mature and sophisticated woman.

Hera stared at the unmarried couple in front of her, and could only sigh helplessly to herself. She was so astute, but how could she not have realised the changes in her sister’s body?

‘Daniel is too impatient, and Yalani... Sigh... How could she have let Daniel get his way so easily? They didn’t even have a simple wedding...’ Hera sighed secretly to herself, and recalled the way Daniel looked at herself.

His gaze felt invasive and was brimming with wildness, even mixed with a distinctive sense of violence. It was as though she was meeting a wolf face to face.

Hera had seen her fair share of such looks, yet none gave her such immense pressure; this was the tragic part about having to rely entirely on someone else!

If not for Daniel's inclination towards fooling around instead of settling down, perhaps Hera herself would have been taken advantage of by him.

Grief suddenly overwhelmed her.

'Rafiniya and... Ley, I wonder how they're doing?' Hera quite liked little Rafiniya, and the mercenary named Ley had also left a deep impression on her. He was powerful and mysterious, his eyes filled with an unprecedented purity that could make one feel at peace.

'Forget Rafiniya, even that Ley guy rejected my good intentions!' But resentment crept into her heart in a split second.

"Madam!" The butler bowed respectfully and supported Hera as she alighted from the carriage, even passing her a handkerchief adorned with exquisite embroidery.

"Thank you very much!" Hera accepted it gracefully, and suddenly felt much better.

'You can be a mercenary for the rest of your life, Ley! When you're old, perhaps one day you will regret declining my offer then as you're chatting with your grandchildren...' Hera gripped the

handkerchief tightly. It was only now that she realised why he left such a deep impression on her.

“Yalani, the person we’re about to visit is a viscount— no wait. Perhaps I should now address him as Marquis Gold Thornblossom... This marquis just inherited his title, and a large fief off the mainland...” Hera could head Daniel constantly speaking from ahead of her. She could even detect an unconcealable envy from the tone of his voice.

That’s right, envy! This was huge territory and the title of Marquis, things that Daniel couldn’t obtain even if he worked hard for the rest of his life!

After interacting with and observing him for a short period of time, Hera could roughly tell that Viscount Tim actually wasn’t as rich as he appeared to be. Living in the imperial capital was extremely expensive, after all.

Daniel was still giving strict instructions ahead. “Yalani, you must bear your manners in mind. After all, he’s a noble that hails from a royal family, and has high demands when it comes to etiquette...”

“Also... Hera!” Daniel suddenly turned around, and abruptly stopped in his tracks, which almost made Hera bump into him.

“I’m... I’m very sorry!” Hera was slightly flushed as she curtsied in apology.

“It’s alright...” Seeing Hera’s mature and beautiful face, Daniel was slightly intoxicated by her, but quickly came to his senses.

“The main point is, Marquis Tim is still very young, and he’s never even had an official engagement. Do you know what this means?” Daniel looked into Hera’s eyes.

“Could it be...” Hera felt a chill in her heart, but surprisingly didn’t reject the idea. Becoming the wife of a marquis was simply a dream that she had never even dared to think of previously.

Although competition for the spot of his actual wife would be fierce, it would be a great help to her small family in any case as long as she managed to have some sort of relationship with him.

‘I’m afraid Daniel thinks the same way. He wants to get into Marquis Tim’s good books through me, and even take a step further by getting support from him...’ Hera was rather sorrowful. She suddenly turned to look at her younger sister, who was tugging at Daniel’s arm. She, too, was wearing her best clothing, and her face was filled with both arrogance and vigilance, just like when she was hugging her own doll when she was younger.

‘Afraid that I’ll take her husband’s favour away from her? What a naive lass, I’m not her enemy...’ The two sisters shared similar facial features, and were both nobles in their own right, which would arouse the interest of males.

‘I hope Daniel won’t do that, or else...’ Hera grieved secretly, yet could only force out a stiff smile. “Rest assured, brother-in-law, I

know what to do.”

“That’s great!” Daniel continued walking ahead, relieved.

The Gold Thornblossom Marquis’ mansion was indeed more imposing than theirs. It was said that this was just his temporary residence, but the entrance to his house was long filled with carriages, practically all of them belonging to nobles. The struggle for title and territory in the Baltic archipelagos had just passed. Those nobles who were on the lookout naturally had to express their goodwill, and even wanted to receive a share of profits from the overseas trade. In fact, Daniel was one of them.

Viscount Daniel clearly hadn’t thought that it would be such a grand occasion that the house would be filled with distinguished guests. Hera and Yalani could only accompany the viscount to the tiny drawing room and continue waiting.

After several hours, Yalani had already made countless complaints, and even Hera was starting to get a little impatient. A young noble then entered through the door.

“Daniel, my friend!” He embraced Daniel cordially, and hurriedly looked over at Hera and her sister. That kind of expression made Hera’s heart sink. “Are these the beautiful sisters from the noble family you mentioned? They seem pretty good!”

Tim rubbed his hands together. In fact, ever since that incident, there had been a demonic fire burning in his heart, waiting to be unleashed. Daniel wasn’t even some figure with authority. But on

account that he had such a pretty fiancée and sister-in-law, perhaps Tim could consider his request...

After enjoying the taste of immense power, Tim's eyes seemed to be ablaze. Yalani tugged her fiancée's hand tightly. But the flattering smile on Daniel's face that Yalani had never seen before made him seem like a stranger.

'Something interesting has happened!' Leylin wandered around Marquis Tim's mansion with his hands behind his back.

In reality, this mansion was entirely his. Without the Faulens having a residence in the imperial capital, Leylin had moved into the place to create the idea that he and Tim were like blood brothers to outsiders.

After all, the Gold Thornblossoms had bought this place specially to use as a stop-over in the imperial capital. Its surroundings and all that were much better than those of hotels.

Tim had been scared out of his wits by Leylin's tricks. Once Leylin showed some interest in this place, he immediately transferred the deed and other things over, offering the entire estate to him. Hence, as a matter of fact, this was already his territory.

Leylin thought of how he still had to stay in the imperial capital for a while longer to study in the Wizards' Guild. His family also needed a place to lodge in the imperial capital as well, so he accepted it without caring about politeness.

‘It’s better to have Tim in the outer seas than a stranger. There are so many opportunities for our family businesses to collaborate...’

Chapter 878 - Reversal

Leylin was rather satisfied with the current situation in the outer seas on the whole. Were external powers to take root there, extra variables would arise. Marquis Tim was someone he understood very well, so it was fine for him to be there.

Being fully aware of the Faulens' abilities, Tim definitely wouldn't stupidly declare war on his own initiative. In fact, Leylin believed that the powers he revealed during this operation were sufficient to intimidate him.

Given that Tim had already completely surrendered himself to him, Leylin didn't mind letting Tim have a taste of success. After all, Tim was the most influential nobleman in the outer seas, and at the same time, he was a vassal of the royal family. It would be a good thing if Leylin could bind Tim to his chariot of war through a mutually beneficial alliance.

No matter how deep one's hatred was, it would melt like ice and dissolve in the face of sudden huge profits. Moreover, there were only a few 'misunderstandings' between them. Still, although Tim had already expressed his will to pledge his allegiance to him, Leylin certainly wouldn't put down his guard against him.

"Ooh.... No...."

"Boohoo... Sister... Daniel... Save me!"

A familiar voice could be heard from the room. The guards and

maids in the area undoubtedly recognised Leylin, and roughly knew his relationship with their master. They even knew about the transfer of the estate, and thus could only stare blankly at him as they didn't dare to stop him.

“Interesting! How should we play this game?” The corners of Leylin's lips curled into a smile as he pondered over this. Shortly after, he suddenly pushed open the door that had been tightly shut.

“What's going on? Tim, my friend? I think I hear an unusual voice!” Leylin scanned the room with a ‘puzzled’ expression. Daniel stood at the side, his face as red as an apple, while Tim's pants were already half undone. The pair of beautiful sisters stood next to the office table, weeping.

“Oh, Leylin!” Tim greeted Leylin as if it wasn't awkward at all, and gave Daniel an introduction at the same time. “He's a court wizard, an honorable viscount. This is Sir Leylin. My closest friend!”

Tim then turned to Leylin and said, “This is Viscount Daniel!”

“Sir... Sir Leylin!” Daniel felt that Leylin looked rather familiar, but he had long forgotten the mercenaries from earlier, hence he still bowed calmly. Court wizard! Honorary viscount! Although these were empty titles, they also represented an exceptional amount of glory!

He could even be favoured by His Majesty, and Marquis Tim was

also his good friend. Just these facts were enough to crush Daniel completely.

“Good day, Sir Daniel!” Leylin had a doubtful expression on his face as he gestured towards Hera and her sister, whose clothes were all over the place.

“Oh! This is a pair of sisters that Daniel sent over from a noble family. What do you think? If you like them, I can give them to you for a while...” Such occurrences were extremely common among nobles and were not worth paying attention to. Tim had evidently misunderstood Leylin’s gesture.

“Yes! Although I’ve popped the younger sister’s cherry, I didn’t touch the older one. She might even be the purest of all virgins...” Daniel was obviously an expert in this field as well.

It was just that from his supposed point of view, that statement seemed wrong. Perhaps he didn’t even intend to actually marry the younger sister, and was just toying with her, thus he could just offer her as a gift without the slightest bit of hesitation.

Hera gave up all hope upon realising this. However, when she saw Leylin once more, her expression suddenly changed drastically. “Ley? You’re Ley! Are you here to save us?”

“Ley?” Yalani was using the clothes on the floor to cover her chest as she sized up the noble who had hastily barged in. He really did look exactly like the mercenary from earlier, just that he now had the air of a noble.

“Ley... The mercenary?” At this point, Daniel had finally realised why Leylin looked so familiar. Wasn’t this Ley the mercenary who had escorted Hera and her sister to his doorstep previously?

It was just that this was a court wizard, an honorary viscount! Compared to a mercenary who was worth as much as mud, they were obviously on two different ends of society. Even Daniel couldn’t immediately see the connection between the two.

Hera felt as though her face was burning hot, and was ashamed to death. She quickly came to her senses.

To think that she thought she had magnanimously given Leylin a way out! Who would have thought this Ley was so secretive that even Marquis Tim, whom Daniel was trying to curry favour with, would be afraid of him?

All her previous actions were probably clownish in his eyes, right? No matter how much adversity they had met with earlier, Hera did not waver. Now, for some reason, streams of tears had begun to flow uncontrollably from her eyes.

“Erm... You guys know each other?” Tim scratched his head as he looked at the people around him, who seemed to be caught in an awkward situation.

“Yes. We met once on the way to the capital...” Leylin spoke very ambiguously. “Viscount Daniel is my friend as well. If there isn’t any other trouble...”

Since it was such a trivial matter, Tim did not particularly mind helping Leylin save face. “No problem. I agree to the matter you raised previously!” Tim said as he clapped Daniel’s shoulder, who immediately showed a joyful expression.

“Thank you so much! Thank you Marquis Tim, and Viscount Leylin! Thank you so much for your help...” Daniel was so emotional that he couldn’t even speak clearly, and could only incoherently express his gratitude towards Leylin and Tim.

‘Hehe... I heard that Yalani is Daniel’s fiancée! He actually even brought her here for this purpose, just to receive a tiny amount of benefits,’ Tim secretly viewed Daniel with disdain, but did not show it. What he was more interested in was the relationship between Leylin and the sisters.

What were women worth to him? If he couldn’t get these two, he could find others. However, if he could use the sisters to discover Leylin’s weak points or the people he held dear, that would be absolutely perfect.

Due to Leylin’s deliberate interruption, the situation that had been about to occur naturally couldn’t continue. Hera and Yalani swiftly rearranged their clothing. “Thank... Thank you...” Hera muttered as they brushed past him, her voice as low as a mosquito’s buzz.

“It’s nothing much.” Leylin looked at Hera, whose face was flushed, and Yalani, who was visibly silent. The corners of his lips

suddenly curved into a strange smile. “If you feel like you can’t stay on in his place, perhaps you can look for Marquise Louise!”

“Marquise?” Hera obviously noticed the honorific.

“Yes.” Leylin had to forcefully hold back his urge to laugh. This woman had just crawled out of a trap, yet was about to fall into an even deeper abyss. “Oh, and Lady Delia as well. Go straight to them, I believe they’ll definitely help you.”

“Thank you! Thank you! Leylin, you’re really such a nice person!” Hera looked at Leylin, who was helping them ‘wholeheartedly’, then recalled her attitude towards them earlier. She started to sob so hard that it was silent.

Leylin watched as the sisters departed, and could even hear Yalani and Daniel screaming and quarreling not long after. Seeing this, Leylin’s smile grew wider.

‘My dear Delia! I found you a pair of vain souls, don’t let me down... What will they become with your exploitation? Pleasure devils? Or lust demons? I look forward to it...’

“Sorry for disturbing a happy occasion, Tim!” Leylin turned to Marquis Tim, who was next to him.

“No matter. It’s my pleasure to be of use to you, sir!” Seeing Leylin in this state, Tim suddenly felt a chill in his heart for some reason. Trying to pry into Leylin’s thoughts was really such a

foolish decision.

.....

Tim eventually left the capital and returned to his territory, the Baltic archipelago. However, with a handwritten letter of alliance from Leylin, Tim now had a little more confidence to continue surviving in the outer seas, and also develop new areas.

After Tim had left, the enormous and magnificent mansion now belonged entirely to Leylin. Tim was even smart enough to leave behind a huge sum of operating funds for Leylin to squander, which pleased him greatly.

With Ernest's recommendation letter, Leylin successfully met another high-level wizard, Simell, and even obtained the authority to conduct experiments alone in Simell's wizard tower.

Although the president of the Wizards' Guild, Meribald, had made the same gesture of goodwill, Leylin eventually chose Simell after thoroughly considering the matter.

After all, given that he was the president of the Wizards' Guild, choosing Meribald would bring about a lot of trouble, but with Simell, it would purely be a working relationship. Additionally, Master Simell had remarkable academic achievements in alchemy, which appealed greatly to Leylin.

Through his studies, he had gradually fused the alchemy

techniques of the Magus World and this world into one, allowing him to regain his original ability as an alchemic Grandmaster.

After reading extensively through the Wizards' Guild's latest magic research and the library resources, Leylin's understanding of magic continuously grew deeper.

Time ticked by, and two years passed within the blink of an eye. Winter had passed and spring had just begun. After the harshest season had passed, the giant trees in the garden were impatiently sprouting their tender buds, full of vitality.

In the study room of his mansion, Leylin was half reclined on his chair. His eyes were slightly shut as he connected to the A.I. Chip.

'A.I. Chip! Display my current statistics.' Leylin inwardly commanded.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 18. Race: Rank 10 Human Wizard. Strength: 8.1. Agility: 7.8. Vitality: 9.2. Spirit: 10. Condition: Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite, Multitalented. Spell Slots: Rank 4(3), Rank 3(5), Rank 2(???), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]
[Progress of Weave analysis: Rank 0 Weave 100%. Rank 1 Weave 100%. Rank 2 Weave 100%. Rank 3 Weave 53.71%. Rank 4 Weave 31.99%.]

The A.I. Chip faithfully executed Leylin's order, and displayed a row of data.

Chapter 879 - Map

The lack of changes to his stats and wizard ranking was within Leylin's expectations. After all, he had used the Devilblood Dagger to advance in rank before, and couldn't be as arrogant now that he was in the capital. The bottleneck was understandable.

What he HAD gained with the materials here was that he'd managed to complete the analysis of the 2nd level of the Weave, removing the restriction on spell slots for it.

'Though I haven't been working hard on increasing my wizard ranking to avoid arousing suspicion, I have already accumulated enough resources. There won't be any problems with becoming a high-ranked wizard. Once I leave the capital, I'll be able to advance quickly...'

Leylin was very happy about his progress in power, but there was something that made him frown. Since two years ago, he'd already sensed a malicious intent circling the surroundings of the capital, and felt a sense of someone watching him. He had a feeling that if he were to leave all of a sudden, he would immediately be met with a terrifying attack.

'Is it that bunch of evil paladins of the God of Justice?' This was the capital after all. If Leylin made his mind to hole himself up, the other party could only watch on helplessly. Leylin had a general idea about who those people hiding in the shadows were. He was planning to take care of the problem in one fell swoop when he left.

“I’ve recorded most of the information that I can from the Wizards’ Guild. There are only a few aspects of research left, and those are nearing completion. Dambrath is a small country after all, and it’s already amazing enough that they have reserves suitable for up to rank 15 wizards...”

After the experiences over 2 years, Leylin had the chance to move once more. As for the destination? Leylin already had numerous choices, with Silvermoon City in the north as his most fitting choice.

“But before leaving, there are a few things I need to handle... I should use this opportunity to take a look there...” A map appeared before Leylin’s eyes. This was the sacrifice from the unlucky captain of the Ashen Hawks, who had been a high-ranked warrior.

“The scope of the map is generally the capital, but there have already been changes to the names of places and their locations. Even with my abilities, I’ve only just incidentally found this place... I never expected it to be there. What kind of surprises are lying in wait for me?” Leylin mumbled to himself, before getting up and leaving the room.

“Young Master!” “Young Master!” The maids and servants that Leylin saw on the way bowed to him with exceptional respect.

They were well aware that he was not just a noble, but also a powerful wizard. He was practically the same as those people in the legends of old!

“Mm.” Leylin looked very calm as he hummed in answer, and it was enough of a response for his servants to feel grateful for.

While walking on the streets, Leylin’s wizard robes gathered reverence from many. His symbol which marked him as a rank 10 wizard gave rise to even more cries of awe. Leylin had gradually gotten used to such treatment. In no time, he arrived in front of a tall wizard tower.

“Leylin!” A few low-ranked wizards who were similarly in wizard robes were already waiting there. A delicate and pretty female wizard took the opportunity to greet him, her eyes gleaming at the sight of him.

“Mm. Julia, Jale, Angelo. Good afternoon!” Leylin nodded, with a gentle and calm expression on his face. These wizards were all Simell’s students. He was currently studying with them under Simell, and they therefore they were somewhat like classmates.

“Senior Leylin, help me take a look at this bottle of ‘Exploding Potion’! I’ve tried it so many times but to no avail...” Julia produced a fiery-red test tube, almost leaning against him.

She knew very well what kind of background he had. Not only did he have exceptional talent at magic, his family had control of the tremendous trade in the outer seas!

Such status had turned Leylin into a sort of prince charming for many ladies in the capital. Some had even taken the initiative to proclaim their love for him, but unfortunately, Leylin politely

rejected all of them. In his opinion, that sort of thing was just too boring. If he wanted to enjoy himself, there were more than enough means to do so at Delia's place. Why would he waste effort on this?

The warm treatment he received from the women made other male wizards shoot envious looks at him, but Leylin was completely unperturbed.

He took the test tube and took a quick look at it, "There are errors in the settling time of the neutralising agent. Also, the spell was cast far too early..."

While he had only made a few comments, many wizards suddenly looked enlightened.

"Alright! If there's nothing else, I'm going in." After casually chatting with others, Leylin entered the wizard tower, leaving behind gazes of envy.

"Mentor Simell gave Leylin the authority to enter the wizard tower as he wishes. That's something only a few disciples get the chance to have!" Julia gazed at the tremendous wizard tower with an envious expression.

"He is a rank 10 wizard, the most powerful magic genius here! If you get to rank 10, mentor will also give you that right..." A male wizard beside her glanced at the badge at his chest. The symbol that implied his status as a rank 5 wizard had always been the source of his pride, but it only seemed unsightly now.

“We really can’t match up to that talent...” The few other wizards were around rank 5, and could only smile wryly at each other after hearing that sentence.

“Grandmaster Simell!” Leylin had rather good luck. Simell hadn’t been performing any experiments, rather resting in the entertainment room outside.

“Oh, it’s Leylin. Come in, take a seat!” Simell was a very spirited old fellow, less than a metre tall with a kindly look on his face.

Strictly speaking, Leylin was not his disciple. Their relationship was similar to modern-day postgraduate students who helped their mentors with experiments, and things were easy and comfortable between them.

After hearing that, Leylin did not hold back and sat down, exclaiming, “Grandmaster Simell, I hope to get the authority to enter Alchemy Room Number 1!”

As he spoke, he placed a golden card on the table. While he was free to do as he wished, there was still a price to pay. Leylin knew this very well.

“Mm, looks like you’re finally preparing to begin! Have you gathered all the materials?” Simell chuckled as he glanced at Leylin’s left hand.

“Thanks to you, I’ve collected everything. I still need to perform the last step in lab conditions within the wizard tower...” Leylin rubbed the ring on his left hand.

“Mm, I’ll authorise the tower genie to let you in. Also, please take Julia and the others into your care a little. I don’t have that much time...” Simell spoke.

How could ordinary, low-ranked wizards or wizard disciples compare to Leylin in his extravagant spending? Every day, they could only accumulate spell slots, and then through brewing potions or smelting items at an elementary level, gain rewards of a few gold coins.

For those who were unlucky, they would have to copy large quantities of spell scrolls and slowly save them so that they could be exchanged for spellbooks and other materials to break through. Some mentors would just completely forget their students. Simell having Leylin help out meant he was already quite kind.

“Alright, I got it!” Leylin got up and took his leave. Within the alchemy lab, Leylin took off his Ring of Wizardry on his left hand.

This ring that could increase the number of spell slots of rank 5 spells by 1 was like a divine artifact for low-ranked wizards. It was also made of unique material with possibilities to strengthen it further. Through his studies under Simell and his own ideas, he had finally found a way to strengthen the item.

“Tower genie, do I have the right to go in yet?” Leylin asked

bluntly.

“Master has authorised wizard Leylin Faulen to use Alchemy Room Number 1, as well as the elemental pools, particle accelerator, rank 2 magic puppets...” A robotic voice sounded. This was the tower genie of the entire wizard tower.

With its help, a wizard’s abilities could be displayed to the limits. However, the tremendous price to create one meant that even if many wizards hoped to have one of their own, they couldn’t go through with it.

Mithril, adamantine, and all sorts of items were shifted out of Leylin’s bag of holding.

“It took me such a long time. I finally have a way to use it...” Leylin had a smile on his face, the Ring of Wizardry already on the table. Dazzling lights enveloped the ring.

.....

Seven days later, Leylin gazed at the brand new ring in his hand, a look of satisfaction on his face.

The A.I. Chip immediately showed the stats.

[Item Name: Ring of Wizardry. Weight: 15g. Materials: Obsidian, Wizard’s Alloy, Dragon Blood, Mithril, Adamantine,

Rainbow Feathers. Effects: 1. Spell slots for all spells under rank 6 increase by 1. (Specific to Wizards) 2. Secondary rank 5 spell, Wail of the Banshee. (Available for use once every 7 days). Power is comparable to a weaker version of Wail of the Banshee. Description: This is a powerful ring that other existences might covet. Its materials have been utilised to bring out its utmost power. Close to becoming a Legendary item.]

The Ring of Wizardry now seemed darker in colour. The powerful magic rays from before had completely disappeared.

“Mm! After refining the soul force on the ring, I get a rank 5 spell? Wail of the Banshee, a rank 5 sound attack spell? Not bad!” Leylin was very content with this improvement.

Wearing the ring that was now slightly heavier than before on his left hand, Leylin got up and left the wizard tower. He had accomplished all that was possible for him to do here, and there was now nothing holding him back from leaving.

‘All that’s left is this map...’ Leylin looked through the information the A.I. Chip supplied as he muttered to himself.

‘The names here are the original ones, and it’s been hundreds of years since some of these places had these names... Seems like this isn’t Siegfried’s treasure map but something even more mysterious...’ Leylin even had the suspicion that Siegfried had not explored the map enough, because there were far too many riddles here, to the point that Leylin was left scratching his head in his confusion.

Thankfully, Leylin had had a lot of time in the past two years. He'd whiled his free time away trying to decode the map. Recently, he had finally begun to discover its true secret!

Chapter 880 - Dark History

“This secret was hidden so carefully. I’m growing more and more interested.” Following the map, Leylin arrived in front of the capital’s library.

The library was in the central district, a place mostly visited by nobles. In an era where the passage of information was strictly regulated, the so called public library actually only catered to a few high-ranked people like scholars and wizards. Leylin was a frequent visitor, to the point that even the doorman recognised him.

“Mister Leylin!” He called out sweetly, not surprised at all at Leylin’s arrival. Leylin had frequented this place in the last two years, using it to augment his database on the World of Gods. With the various databases in the A.I. Chip having gradually been filled to completion and its foundations completed, his visits had also grown more infrequent.

The library was as tranquil as ever. The white marble building stood tall, seemingly eternal, and the only sounds within it were the rustling of turning pages.

The interior of the library was very spacious and empty. Next to the rows upon rows of bookshelves were a few rattan seats, where many scholars rested.

In these two years, some had become acquaintances that Leylin was on nodding terms with. They would nod at him if they caught

his eye, before bending their heads down and wading into the sea of knowledge again. Everyone quietly did their own work, and Leylin loved this atmosphere.

‘I never expected that something I’ve been trying hard to find was right by my side!’ Leylin sighed inside, arriving in the deeper parts of the library.

It was rather dim inside, and many of the tomes on the shelves had already fallen apart. Numerous scattered pages were sandwiched in worn-out book covers. The sight already left people dizzy.

While the area had already been tidied up, a putrid smell from printing ink still lingered in the air. This region was where the library piled up random books and documents, and very few ventured here.

‘The results of only passing on knowledge to the elites means that once society collapses, information can no longer be passed on...’ Leylin looked at the thick layer of dust on the shelf and sighed at the thought. Of all the historic records that he had gathered, from the invasion from the Magus World till now, there were many blanks in the middle. This was the result of a loss of culture.

Descriptions of the dawn of the gods was a taboo amongst taboos. If any scholar dared tread on this forbidden zone, they would end up put on trial by large churches and burnt at stake.

‘Trying to conceal it won’t solve anything. Even rank 1 Magi of the Magus World know already about the ancient Final War, and have been working hard to regain the glory of the ancient times. The World of Gods is more conservative... Is it because the World Will is asleep, or is it a restriction on the gods?’

Leylin’s eyes shone as he arrived at the depths of the library. This was a very remote area where it was exceptionally quiet. Not a soul was in sight, and even the cleaners rarely came here.

“Not bad, not bad! That saves me a lot of trouble.” Leylin sized up the surroundings, nodding in satisfaction. A transparent magic barrier isolated this place from the outer world. Just in case, Leylin had added a layer of illusion such that anyone who came here would only see a mess and darkness, with volumes and trash lying around.

“The immemorial elf of spring...” Leylin slowly chanted a passage of a mysterious incantation. This was something he had obtained from the map, where the secret incantation to activate it was hidden in the poem next to the map.

‘They actually use the Mek Coding which has been lost to history, hiding the secret incantation at the beginning of every line. If not for the A.I. Chip analysing it against a sea of data, it would have been impossible to decode it...

‘There’s even a restricted time where it can be opened. It has to be after the ancient ‘Spring Sacrificial Ceremony’, or there won’t be a response. Why do I find this method so familiar...’ Leylin looked at the changes to his surroundings with interest. This

method of maintaining secrecy and such elaborate set-ups reminded Leylin of Magi.

Indeed, Magi! Only they, who pursued the truth with the most extreme of harshness could think of something so intricate, with coding and an incantation that was complicated to the extreme. It only served to further his anticipation.

“This is the beginning of spring, and the ceremony just passed. It’s 2 o’clock in the afternoon, and it matches with the poem, ‘The scorching sun travels to the northern corner of the sky’...” Leylin muttered, eyes glinting.

A specific time, place and secret incantation. With these three requirements fulfilled, an ancient bookshelf suddenly creaked.

‘It’s not a magic formation. I didn’t notice anything when I scanned this place earlier. Such concealment techniques...’ The glint in Leylin’s eyes brightened.

The shelf shifted away, revealing a path that led downwards. However, Leylin did not descend.

‘If I didn’t interpret it wrongly, I’ll only enter a dimensional maze if I go there. Even high-ranked wizards could die there... The real treasure is here.’ Leylin headed to the shelf that had shifted, a spell formation appearing at his fingertips.

This was not a spell model of the Weave used by wizards, but a

real, higher-grade model similar to that in the Magus World! Countless rays of light fused together like a loop to form a special three dimensional rune.

“In the name of sklngla, open!” Leylin chanted. The spell model in his hands flashed and disappeared into the shelf. The light quickly dimmed, and nothing changed. However, a hint of delight showed on his expression. He knocked at the back of the shelf, and a hollow sound resounded.

“The solid wooden shelf became hollow...” Leylin mumbled to himself, “The item wasn’t actually hidden here but in another void node. Only at certain times with the correct incantation will it link with space and time in order to show the true treasure...”

His expression constantly changed, “Such a method of overlapping space and time is practically a reproduction of methods in the Magus World!”

Slightly agitated, Leylin used the dagger to slash at the shelf to take the treasure that his predecessor had hidden. At this stage, he was certain that Siegfried had never come here and only been lucky to get the map.

The shelf itself was small. Even though it was hollow, only a thick black book made of parchment paper was there. This was the harvest from Leylin’s exploration.

“I sense... an aura similar to Magi... There must have been Magi who comprehended laws conducting experiments here trying to

induct Magi into the natives...” Leylin was in no hurry to begin reading. After verifying it was harmless, he immediately kept it in his bag of holding and quickly began to clear the traces of his presence.

After he left the library, the shelf had been silently shifted back to its original position. Even the wooden planks that had been hollowed out were exchanged.

Once he had returned to his residence, he sent the servants away and went to his underground secret room. After activating his protection spell formation, Leylin made himself a hot cup of tea and began to look through his profits this time.

Past the black cover, much of the parchment paper had rotted. There were strange, twisted letters on it, with a unique air to them.

“It’s the Amidix Script used in ancient times! Thankfully, I’ve seen content on this before... The A.I. Chip already has enough data to analyse it...” Leylin began to interpret the words in the book.

‘The stars in the horizon are falling! I... I’ve seen the falling meteors when a true god dies! They are a group of powerful gods from another world. They call themselves... Magi!’

“Is this a record by natives of the final war? Interesting, interesting!” Leylin read on.

‘The sky is crying, the earth is wailing... The continent is in pieces in an instant. After the paramount high gods sank into slumber, the battle god Ares and Mother Earth fell one after another...’

‘The Magi and the gods brazenly showed their strength. A careless attack seemed to consume what had accumulated in the universe over millions of years...’

As so much time had passed, there was still damage despite the perfect protective methods. It made it more difficult for Leylin to interpret.

‘... In the dark era... A god from another world descended. It called itself the Distorted Shadow, a great rank 8 Magus!’

‘The Distorted Shadow enlightened humans and imparted great power of magic...’

“The gods all sent down their avatars, ruthlessly killing all who had inherited the power of distortions...”

“The rejection by the world eventually caused the fall of the Distorted Shadow...”

The gods finally defeated the Magi and sealed off the World of Gods, establishing a network to fend against magic to prevent something similar from happening again...”

‘Year 327 of the Dark Calendar. Another generation of people with extraordinary powers emerged. They successfully went through experiments to break away from the Weave, and called themselves arcanists. They had powerful arcane arts that allowed them to burn mountains and fill seas. Even the gods feared them...’

‘Year 981 of the Dark Calendar. The Arcane Empire was destroyed, and thus began the age of the gods... Arcanists became taboo. Any spellcasters who did not use the Weave were listed as wanted and annihilated by the churches of various gods...’

Eventually, the dark history of the gods showed itself before Leylin.

“As expected, experiments to make Magi natives were conducted before, and they succeeded as well... All during the dusk of the gods.” The rise of the arcanists evidently was a result of this. Those obscure methods to cast spells were a mutated version of spell models from the Magus World.

“It’s far too troublesome to simulate a profession out of nowhere. Even with the A.I. Chip it’ll take a long time. But if I can get an arcanist’s inheritance...”

Chapter 881 - Taking The Bait

Leylin was inspired. Truly, truly inspired from the bottom of his heart. Compared to the emasculated profession that was wizardry, the arcane arts were practically built for his sake. If he could change professions and become an arcanist, his power would definitely grow.

He was also very interested in the inheritance of the ancient Magi who had comprehended laws. It was a pity that most of the content in the notebook were records of history. There were only a few sentences that mentioned arcanists.

“A matured path to power and an account of experiences will be a much better reference.” Leylin’s eyes shone as he scanned through the book, hoping to find any clues regarding arcanists.

Arcanists had solved the problem of being rejected by the World of Gods. While they had been celebrated for a short while, they soon became taboo and intolerable to the gods. All information about them had been destroyed, and this was the first time Leylin was seeing descriptions of them.

Through the A.I. Chip’s precise analysis and research, Leylin finally found a place that somewhat had connections with arcanists. However, once he found the location on the map, his expression changed.

“I never thought it’d be here.” Leylin unhurriedly memorised the landmark and then stowed the black notebook away.

“From the tone and clues, the person who wrote this must have been an arcanist. In that case, their words should be trustworthy...”

Arcanists were the result of the painstaking work that ancient Magi had done to adapt to the World of Gods. Though it was not as if Leylin could not begin his own research into the department, it would be a massive waste of time. He wouldn't be able to go as far as what those Magi had. He had to get the arcanists' inheritance!

“But it's coincidentally in the north... This is just...” Leylin sighed, “I guess I'll need to bring my schedule forward. Thankfully, I don't have anything else to do in the capital. All the information accessible to wizards below the higher ranks has been recorded...”

At this thought, Leylin headed outside and clapped his hands, “Men!”

.....

As the first son of a baron and honorary viscount, Leylin's status made him a nobody in the capital. His leaving would not raise any ruckus... except from those who had their eyes on him, of course.

Crack! The wooden cup cracked, clear water splashing out from the gaps in his fist.

“What? He’s finally leaving?” Lorent was still in his paladin attire, though he now looked rather haggard, and his eyes were bloodshot. Ever since his decision to hang on to Leylin, he had been hiding in the shadows of the capital, waiting for his target to mess up.

Unfortunately, that little noble was very slippery. He basically did not leave his residence, and the places he frequented were like the Wizards’ Guild and places for nobles that were guarded tightly. He had not even left the capital, making the paladin grind his teeth the entire time.

His target seemed to have noticed that he was being spied on, and had been unbelievably kind in his daily actions to the point where it was unquestionable. He lacked the terrible vices some nobles had, and he was practically the model that all nobles should have sought to emulate.

Since he could not find other proof of him committing crimes, Lorent obviously could not do anything to him. After wearing down his patience, Lorent had already decided to make his move and take Leylin in!

However, this was something he was doing in private. He could not attack a noble in public in the capital, or the church would be the ones that would not let him off! While Lorent detested Leylin, he had no plans to die together with him. Hence, the operation had been put on hold till now.

“There’ll be plenty of opportunities once you leave the capital! You will definitely be punished for your crimes!” Lorent mumbled

to himself, face gleaming majestically righteously. It was as if he was the personification of justice and kindness.

.....

Days later, a carriage slowly left the range of the capital.

A few bandits that had been eyeing it definitely saw a young noble getting on the carriage and immediately sent out a person to inform the people at the back.

“A bunch of troublesome flies...” Leylin was evidently the one inside. His eyes were now closed, obviously having discovered the people peeping on him long before.

‘The followers of the Sovereign King of Gluttony in the Dambrath Kingdom have all been gathered and managed by Delia. The faith is still spreading...’ After making sure that the bait was now on the hook, Leylin strangely thought of something else.

In two years, he had reorganised the devil worshippers in the entire Dambrath Kingdom, and with Delia’s power as a pleasure devil, it was easy to control them.

At the thought of Delia, Leylin was reminded of the depraved balls that she hosted for the fallen. He had to admit that she was very fascinating and knew how to enjoy herself. A certain pair of noble sisters were on the verge of becoming famous, and Leylin watched their souls in secret to find that they were just one step

away from falling to become devils.

‘Seems like I’m rather proficient in the abilities of devils... But even if they transform, those sisters will only become regular devils. Only souls that are exceptionally pure and determined will be even more powerful after falling, turning into the most terrifying devils...’

Leylin suddenly recalled the female knight, as well as the priest and paladins of the God of Justice. Those souls were the ones that had devils extremely thirsty for them. The purer a soul was, the greater the possibility that a legendary being would be born when it fell.

“She might be going north too...” Leylin thought back to the scene from before when they’d bade farewell, a slight smile about his lips, “Till then...”

The carriage slowly rode out of the gates of the capital, and there appeared a wide expanse of wheat fields at both sides. After walking past a few ranches, signs of human activity gradually grew more sparse.

“Master...” The voice of the coachman was heard from the front, “I sense a wave of enemies nearby!”

He was evidently not a regular coachman. It was unknown what kind of methods he had used to conceal the powerful energy undulations on his body.

“Don’t worry about it. Go on!” Leylin chuckled nonchalantly, “The fish couldn’t wait any longer and took the bait...”

He’d tolerated the paladin for long enough too.

Smite Evil! The other party had more tolerance than Leylin had anticipated. After driving into a low forest of shrubs, golden light in the shape of a crescent shot out from the roadside, the target evidently the carriage Leylin was in.

The paladin’s Smite Evil glowed incomparably hot, and held purifying power. It was very formidable against the undead, devils, demons, and all other evil. Even Leylin did not want to contend with this purification energy.

Intense magic rays flickered from the carriage, and Leylin tore through a few spell scrolls.

Magic Barrier! Dragon’s Breath! Fireball!

Boiling hot flame energy met the evil slash in the air. Qi and flames shot everywhere, exploding in resplendent heat and light. A magic protective layer had already risen in the surroundings, having the effects of preventing probings and prophecies.

These were Leylin’s accumulations over these two years. Not only had he learnt more spell models, he also had the wealth and physical resources to make suitable magic items and scrolls for himself.

“Evil will be punished! Leylin Faulen, you will be put on trial for the loss of innocent lives in the outer seas today!” Lorent had on a full set of paladin armour, the rays of light on his expression dazzling to the extreme. There was even an unusual flush on his face.

“Hehe... Paladin? Haven’t you seen the kingdom’s decree and statement?” Leylin pulled the fabric of the carriage and walked out. He seemed to be teasing the paladin, “The pirates in the outer seas have nothing to do with me. As a follower of the God of Justice, are you holding fast to your own justice by trampling over the law?”

Evidently, when it came to battles of the tongue, Leylin absolutely dominated him. Lorent immediately turned red.

“Ah... It’s because there are so many evil maggots boring into the holes in the laws that criminals like you can get away with any crimes! Today, I, Lorent, will end all these mistakes!” Knowing he could not refute Leylin, Lorent chose to use his own method to defend his justice.

Holy light filled his longsword, and a powerful qi even more powerful than Siegfried’s exploded. Shrouded in this light, the paladin seemed even more unsullied. It formed another layer of translucent armour, completing his original metallic breastplate.

‘Paladins are all so troublesome! Not only are they immune to many negative effects, they have a terrifying vitality that gives

them resistances to all sorts of illnesses...’

“Unfortunately, I am not your only opponent...” The spell that Leylin had prepared for a long time was launched. “Hold Person II!”

Even if his opponent had resistance to magic, he still hesitated for a moment in the face of Leylin’s high-grade spell.

The coachman, who had been cowering aside, suddenly made a move. A black dagger instantly appeared in his hands, allowing him to break through the protective barrier and appear in front of Lorent.

The dagger, which concealed a powerful curse, broke straight through Lorent’s defences and formed a huge wound on his chest.

“You... Tiff The Defiler!” Lorent retreated, rays of divine healing spells flickering on his body. His habit of holding back when it came to commoners made it such that he did not have his guard against the ordinary-looking coachman, and he had been ruthlessly attacked by Tiff.

“You’re actually banding together with someone like him? This crime alone could send you to be burnt at stake!” Lorent glanced at Leylin, who was in front of him, looking delighted because he’d finally found evidence of Leylin committing a crime!

“Is that so? That’s only possible if you can send that information

on!” Leylin shrugged his shoulders.

Chapter 882 - Perfect Body

Indistinct shouts and cries could be heard, causing Lorent's expression to change.

"We've been surrounded, and their numbers are huge..." A high-ranked assassin suddenly appeared from the shadows, a demonic claw with sharp nails poking out from his chest.

The assassin mumbled and collapsed, revealing the figure of a high-ranked pleasure devil behind him.

"You're actually colluding with a devil!" Lorent yelled, unhesitatingly striking out. He had been overwhelmed with shock. This noble seemed to have some terrifying secret that surpassed his imagination.

"Quick! The confusion spell that I set up won't last for long. We can't let even one person go!" Leylin's expression was icy.

After two years, Tiff and Delia were now completely under his thumb. He had gathered the strength of all the devil worshippers to kill Lorente in order to ensure it was done!

"Don't worry, master!" Delia had now completely demonified herself. With Tiff, who had almost legendary strength, it was no problem to kill a mere high-ranked paladin.

Given that they were of factions that were natural enemies, with

hatred accumulated between them, things blazed the moment they started fighting. All sorts of spell undulations rained destruction on the region.

It was a pity that Lorent's extraordinary willpower and strength made no difference. A high-grade devil and a near-Legend Professional were enough to crush him. His surrounding comrades all cried out for the last time in their lives, gnawing at his soul like ants.

"Has it... has it reached this state?" Lorent's eyes were slightly blurry, with a black dagger stuck into his chest. His longsword had disappeared long ago, and his armour was full of holes from the devil's corrosive fire.

He panted. There was no remorse for losing his life, instead indignance and pain that justice was not served,

"Why... Why are there people like you in the world!" He looked at the young wizard drawing close, eyes like saucers and even blinking bloody tears.

"Because devils run amok in this world!" Leylin seemed to sigh, and the Devilblood Dagger slammed into Lorent's forehead.

The Devilblood Dagger trembled. This was a high-ranked paladin who was subordinate to the God of Justice, definitely the strongest person it had ever absorbed strength from! It transmitted terrifying, berserk draconic energy to Leylin's body, sending it in waves. It eventually cried out, unable to take the burden.

‘My Devilblood Dagger was made on Faulen Island. I hadn’t used any high-grade materials, which is why it can’t take this pressure...’ Leylin’s eyes glinted. A dark luster shot into the dagger from his hands.

“Woo Woo...” The skull at the end of the dagger roared, numerous tiny blood vessels extending and latching onto all parts of Lorent’s corpse.

Something that looked like a tumour was absorbed from these blood vessels. Powerful holy force was transformed, to the point that the dagger itself showed signs of breaking.

Ting! Finally, with a sad cry, the Devilblood Dagger shattered with a dull sound.

But the moment before it cracked, Leylin felt the transfer of tremendous life energy. The A.I. Chip’s prompt sounded:

[Beep! Host has gone through a one-time boost from the Devilblood Dagger. Strength +1.9. Agility +2.2. Vitality +0.8.]

Leylin’s current stats were abruptly refreshed,

[Strength: 10. Agility: 10. Vitality: 10. Spiritual Force: 10.]

The massacre and all of Lorent's life force had pushed the rest of Leylin's stats to the bottleneck of 10 points. Alike to 1 point, this was an incredibly difficult hurdle in the World of Gods, showing how tough breaking through was.

Leylin now heard a sharp ringing sound from his soul. After his various stats had broken through, a long-awaited power spread throughout his body and limbs, landing him in a strange state.

The A.I. Chip's prompts continued to show.

[Beep! Host's various stats have reached 10. Obtained Feat: Elementary Perfect Body.]

An introduction to this feat followed.

[Elementary Perfect Body. As the host's genes have gone through their initial upgrades, host has obtained a quality unique to exceptional creatures in the World of Gods. Body now possesses elementary resistances to poison, fire, cold, and corrosion. Endurance in various environments has increased.]

"So having a property of 1 all round is a threshold for regular beings. 10 is the threshold for exceptional creatures..." Leylin's

eyes flickered. His current stats had changed.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 18. Race: Human, Rank 10 Wizard. Strength: 10. Agility: 10. Vitality: 10. Spirit: 10. Status: Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite, Elementary Perfect Body. Spell Slots: Rank 4(3), Rank 3(5), Rank 2(???), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]

After breaking through this bottleneck of extraordinary power, Leylin felt the limitations on the advance of his spiritual force loosen. It now grew extremely lively, to the point that he was only a step away from making contact with the 5th level of the Weave.

“Deal with the aftermath according to my orders.” Leylin slowly exhaled, as if he had gone through a complete transformation.

“Understood, Master!” Madam Delia respectfully bowed, her flaming tail and devilish wings playfully bouncing about. While they already knew his identity on the surface before, Delia and Tiff were now even more reverent towards him.

On the surface, he seemed ordinary, which meant what was hidden underneath that front was something more terrifying. For Delia, who had been a devil for numerous years, she understood this fully well.

As for Tiff, an existence that had been invaded by Leylin’s soul force for years, the effect of Leylin himself being in front of him was obvious.

“Good! Tiff and I will go ahead secretly. Delia, you’re in charge of the network in the Dambrath Kingdom as well as the surrounding followers...” Leylin gave instructions for his plans.

Once everything went as he had planned, Leylin turned to gaze in the direction of the imperial capital.

“The next time I return, things will be completely different...” Leylin’s eyes shone.

.....

Great azure waves roiled and crashed in the vast sea, and ice sheets and a snowy barren island could faintly be seen in the distance. A few seagulls soared in the horizon, occasionally letting out a few clear cries.

A merchant ship heading north was speeding through the winds and waves. The sailors controlling the ship had tanned skin, their hands full of dark calluses gripping tightly on the mooring rope as if it was their life and everything.

“The oceans in the north are slightly different from the outer seas of Dambrath in the south.” At this point, the guests had all returned to the hold of the ship, and only Leylin and Tiff who was disguised as his butler were on deck.

In the face of such a sudden stormy sea, Leylin did not find it

hard to adapt. Rather, he began reminiscing about his time with the Scarlet Tigers.

‘The kingdom’s navy has long since returned. I wonder how Isabel and the rest have been doing...’ Leylin gazed at the huge waves afar, yet he did not seem to see them. He instructed Tiff, “Legends are active in Silverymoon. Your identity is sensitive, so once we reach the northern lands you don’t have to follow me. Try to gather some forces in secret...”

“Understood!” Tiff pressed his right hand to his chest, looking exceptionally solemn. In this period of time, he was now certain that this little noble must be the chosen one of the feathered serpent god, Kulkulkan, and could even be the child of the god...

“Come to think of it, we’re finally reaching the northern harbour...” Leylin nodded, noting that the ship had already successfully passed through the storm.

The World of Gods was vast, and hastening on the journey was an exhausting and dangerous matter. Even as a medium-ranked wizard and with Tiff who was on the verge of becoming a Legend protecting him, it still required much effort to reach the north from the south.

They set off from the Dambrath Kingdom and headed north, passing through numerous human kingdoms and bypassing a few regions belonging to other races. They had even met with danger a few times.

The horse carriage had been relinquished after that, and they switched to a ship. The entire journey took around a year's time.

“Welcome, esteemed young master!” The leader of the sailors came over, a trace of respect in his gaze. To be able to take on such huge waves without even a twitch meant this noble was a true man of the sea! That meant he was worthy of being respected by these sailors.

“Mm! We're finally past that stormy area...” Leylin laughed.

“Recently, the sea tribes in this area have been very irritable. The tsunami was caused by an angered deep sea whale. Thankfully, our druid managed to calm it down in time...”

His expression was grim, “If this situation continues, I'm afraid we'll have to give up on this route and invite a great or even legendary druid to investigate the cause...”

Leylin had to admit that druids were extremely proficient at protecting the environment and placating dangerous species. Being closely attuned to nature, most druids were elves, though there was no lack of humans and other races. This was even more obvious in Silverymoon.

“So we're finally reaching the jewel of the northern lands...” Leylin exclaimed in admiration.

Silverymoon was the city of wizards. This legendary city was also

called the jewel of the northern lands!

The city was protected by the Chosen of the Goddess of the Weave, who was also her daughter. She represented the peak of magic among humans, and every year countless wizards were attracted to this place so they could further their studies and train.

Silverymoon contained the most advanced research on magic, and the imperial palace even held information about legendary spells!

Chapter 883 - Meeting

Leylin obviously would not let go of this city of magic. Dambrath didn't have much information past that to get to the higher ranks, forget becoming a Legend. Furthermore, the A.I. Chip deduced from the ancient notebook Leylin had obtained that the inheritance of arcanists and Arcane Arts was likely to be found in the northern lands. Given all this, it was necessary for Leylin to go to Silvermoon City.

“While the journey took almost a year, it's not as if I gained nothing...” Leylin smiled as he took a look at his stats.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 18. Race: Human, Rank 11 Wizard. Strength: 10. Agility: 10. Vitality: 10. Spirit: 11. Status: Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite, Elementary Perfect Body. Spell Slots: Rank 5(2), Rank 4(4), Rank 3(6), Rank 2(???), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]

After obtaining a Perfect Body, Leylin sensed his body could adapt better to terrible environments. On top of that, his spirit seemed to have broken through some bottleneck. His rate of improvement had increased, as if there was a further boost to his own innate talent in wizardry.

Leylin had broken through to rank 11 after a year of meditation, even without the ability of the Devilblood Dagger. He could now cast rank 5 spells!

In the World of Gods, rank 3 wizards could cast rank 1 spells, rank 5s could cast rank 2 spells, rank 7s rank 3 spells and so on. A rank 11 wizard could cast rank 5 spells, and once one became a rank 15 wizard, they could cast rank 7 spells without backlash. That was when one became a high-ranked wizard.

High-grade professionals above rank 15 would get special treatment no matter where they went, and that was especially so for high-ranked wizards. With a large number of spells that affected groups, their destructive power surpassed that of those that relied purely on their physiques. This put them at the peak of power.

Were there no gods in this world, given that they could cast spells of priests, druids, and sorcerers would long since have named the World of Gods the World of Wizards.

Wizards held the balance of power in the World of Gods. The arcanists had even established a tremendous empire after the twilight of the gods, but with the comeback of the gods they soon collapsed...

‘It’s because of the powerful abilities of high-ranked wizards that information on these spells are strictly regulated in all nations. The only place where things are less stringent is Silvermoon...’ Leylin thought inside.

This was so because they were extremely wealthy and also had the backing of Mystra, the Goddess of the Weave. They naturally had the means to do so.

‘It’s said that the master of Silverymoon City, the Chosen of the Weave Goddess who is rumoured to be her daughter, is a peerless beauty...’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘The secret rumours state that one can get the favour of the Goddess of the Weave by growing close to her, and it’s even possible to increase the number of low-ranked spell slots in one’s possession...’

This slight benefit was nothing to Leylin. Having analysed the first three levels of the Weave completely, he no longer needed these low-rank spell slots. Furthermore, if he were to get too close to the Goddess, his disguise could be noticed. That would be a true tragedy.

‘Come to think of it, the analysis has progressed more quickly ever since I hit rank 11. Level 3 is almost completely done.’ The higher the rank of a wizard, the further one could make contact with the Weave. The A.I. Chip could therefore analyse the Weave at a faster rate, which was something he had already tested before.

‘Given the resources Silverymoon can provide it won’t be difficult to become a high-ranked wizard, but I’ll need to get lucky to become a Legend. The Devilblood Dagger won’t help much either, there’s no point smelting another one...’

With stats below 5, the dagger’s boost remained obvious. Even from 5 to 10 points it would be found lacking, not to mention its weakness later. On top of that, it wasn’t logical to carry a devil’s item by one’s side for such a slight increase in stats.

After all, this was not a rural area like Dambrath. There were legendary wizards here, but on top of that there were the Chosen, who were personifications of the gods. Leylin had no confidence in facing them.

Since the dagger did not give him any obvious boost, Leylin was already prepared to stop using it even if it had not been destroyed, and perhaps hand it down to his underlings.

‘When it comes to raising strength quickly, there are quite a number of ways in Beelzebub’s memories. They can all help one reach the realm of Legend and above... It’s a pity that there’s either terrible repercussion or the contamination of devilish energy. It’s far too troublesome to deal with that. I guess it’s better to walk the path of a wizard step by step... It’ll be even better if I can get the inheritance from the arcanists...’

Just when Leylin was deep in thought, a shy voice sounded from his side, “May– May I know if you are a wizard apprentice heading towards Silverymoon City?”

It pulled Leylin out of his thoughts, and he eyed the three females behind him– No, the three little girls behind him. They had evidently heard about the sea having calmed down and come on deck.

The one who had spoken was the youngest of all. She had brown hair, and under her fair forehead were a pair of azure eyes. The slight smile on her lips easily gave one a favourable opinion of her.

Beside her were two female companions, one taller than the other. They seemed to be sisters, with similar faces and both wearing blue checkered skirts with little flowers at the edges.

Tiff glared at the girls who had interrupted his young master. Though he concealed his strength, his aura alone left the three girls feeling suffocated and terrified.

“I– I’m sorry, mister! I– I was just curious!” The girl in the middle grasped her skirt, looking on the verge of tears. Though they had housekeepers and nannies sent out by their family by the side, they had never faced an old man so stern that it was frightening.

“Stop it, Tiff. You’re scaring our friends!” Leylin saw the figure behind him and chuckled like the warmest spring wind. It melted away the terror.

“My apologies, young master!” Tiff took a step back, “And the three young ladies as well!”

“It’s alright...” The girl spoke more fluently now, “My name is Bessany, and the two sisters here are Ena and Isadora. We’re all looking to apprentice in Silvermoon... Are you the same, mister?”

‘Wizard apprentices...’ Apprentice wizards were below rank 3. They had talent in wizardry and could use magic, able to cast rank 0 spells. Leylin scanned the girls to see that they all had the spiritual undulations of wizards, and they’d all made contact with the first level of the Weave.

“My name is Leylin, and I’m a wizard!” Leylin smiled, hiding his rank. After all, there was no point in that.

“As expected!” Isadora spoke from beside Bessany, “Where are you from, Leylin? Why do I hear a southern accent from you?”

These girls were like excited little sparrows as they surrounded Leylin, asking a whole bunch of questions noisily.

Leylin smiled as he conversed with them. This was the sort of infectious power he had, able to instil a favourable impression in the hearts of weak existences. Of course, this could also be attributed to his training as a noble.

From his conversation with the three girls, Leylin quickly came to know of some basic information. Bessany and the sisters came from two little families in the north. They had tested with talent in wizardry, and their families had sent them to train in Silverymoon.

Bessany was good-natured and spoke the most enthusiastically. As for the sisters, Ena was not as carefree and bright as Isadora, seeming more shy.

“My family gave me 500 gold coins this time, and I’ll need to use it sparingly. Hopefully, I’ll be able to train under a middle-ranked wizard...” Bessany suddenly sighed, looking worried.

500 gold coins was obviously a huge amount that was enough for

even a noble to live liberally for five years! However, this amount was far from enough for the development of wizards.

But what could be done? Bessany's family was merely the smallest of noble families. The 500 gold coins themselves had required quite a bit of effort, and they'd had to sell some property to raise that much.

Still, it would all be worth it if a wizard arose from their ranks. At this thought, Bessany inwardly gritted her teeth.

“The registration fees for the poorest wizard academy in Silverymoon is already 100 gold coins. As for studying under a middle-ranked wizard? That's basically impossible... Apprentices like us from small noble families can only help others with experiments or copy scrolls to earn money...” Isadora laughed wryly. Evidently, she had a better understanding of the training of wizards.

Leylin realised something. These wizards were probably sucking up to him so that they could become allies.

‘As expected of nobles, huh? After studying so much, they consider more than the average person. It's a pity that most of it is useless...’ Leylin sighed.

He looked less than 20, and without the emblem that showed his wizard ranking it wasn't surprising for him to be mistaken as an apprentice. If he really was a low-ranked wizard, he might have played along for a while, but he had no intentions of doing that—

they were not at the same level!

Chapter 884 - The North

Having made up his mind, Leylin naturally made his stance clear.

“In that case... we won’t bother you longer...” Bessany sounded somewhat disappointed and even upset as she pulled at Ina’s hand to leave. Isadora, on the other hand, seemed unresigned, but similarly did not say a word.

“How nice it is to be young...” Leylin stared at the backs of the three disciples and sighed. If he added up the years from his main body as well, he was old enough to be their grandfather’s grandfather, perhaps even older than that. He naturally was qualified to say such a thing.

Tiff, who was beside him, saw how old and experienced Leylin seemed, and his eyes revealed a trace of shock.

“Oh, we’ve reached the harbour!” Leylin cast Eagle Eye on himself and gazed at the harbour in the distance, unable to stop the smile blooming on his face. The sailor on the observation deck noticed this as well, and cheers immediately spread through the ship.

After getting off the ship, Leylin first parted ways with Tiff, telling him to work from the shadows. He, on the other hand, hired a carriage and hastened towards Silvermoon City. With how close the port was, it only took about a day via horse carriage.

The coachman driving the coach was an old man with a crooked

back. Lean muscles protruded on his arms, and there were a few long scars on his face which seemed to be memories from a time adventuring or in the army.

He was called Old Bayer, and was rather entertaining. His smile revealed a few missing teeth, but not only did it make him look less threatening, it even made one fond of him.

Pak! Old Bayer swung his whip in a practiced manner while talking to Leylin, “You must have great foresight to have chosen our company. Honestly, do you think there’s an area here Old Bayer doesn’t know well? The northern lands, especially... When I first joined the army...”

Leylin’s eyes darted everywhere as he took in the sights. The first impression he had was that the northern lands were vast, the boundless plains not having a soul in sight.

The second thought he had was that it was cold! It was not yet truly winter, but the people outside were already wearing thick coats.

Seeing the white breath steaming from Old Bayer’s mouth, Leylin chuckled, “Army? So you’re a retired soldier? Who did you go to war with?”

Upon hearing this, Old Bayer made a conclusion, “You must be from another land, yes?”

“Indeed. I come from the south, the Dambrath Kingdom!” Leylin had nothing to hide when it came to his birthplace. He had no criminal record, and the only thing worthy of picking at was his work as a pirate, but the king himself was vouching for him which rendered it meaningless. After reaching Silverymoon, he was prepared to show his status as a noble and see if he could get special treatment.

“The south... That’s a good place...” Old Bayer sighed. “How can there not be battles in the north?”

Not waiting for Leylin to ask, he continued, “We have to fight off the invasion of the orcs and other ambitious human kingdoms, and even clear the plains of the green-skinned goblins. Those wretched goblins really know how to breed, and we have to wipe them out practically every year. Compared to the orcs and knights from other kingdoms, I’d rather stay on the plains and kill the elves...”

“Orcs?!” Leylin slapped his head, “Right, I forgot about them...”

The World of Gods was huge, and Silverymoon City of the north was only the most northern human-occupied region. Through the Sunrise Mountain Range and past the boundless wilderness, there were many orc tribes and even a kingdom!

Humans had their gods, and the orcs also had their own. Under the command of the master god of the orcs, Gelsh, there were practically wars every year as they invaded the civilised world. Due to having their own circumstances and personalities, the gods had divided factions and clashes when it came to their own organisations. They even fought themselves

“Seems like gods can never rid themselves of their emotional state of mind. Of course, it’s the same for Magi who comprehend laws...” The so-called gods and Magi of laws were merely powerful mortals. Leylin knew this well.

Of course, he preferred it this way. If he lost his personality and emotion, even if he became a true supreme god what difference would there be between him and a computer. Immortality and freedom were two aspects that could never be separated.

With varying circumstances, the orc empire frequently had clashes with the kingdom, and even caused war to break out. Those in the north obviously would not wait to get killed. They gathered in Silverymoon, and with some guidance formed an alliance. They used the power of magic to tenaciously resist the invasion of the orcs.

In this world, humans had a great advantage. Their divine strength far exceeded that of the orcs. Even with internal strife, it was still possible for Silverymoon to stand tall.

With the unceasing battles, Silverymoon’s status grew higher and higher, to the point that the lands they had influence over expanded bit by bit.

There were already faint cries for the Chosen, the ruler of Silverymoon, to become the queen and establish Silverymoon Kingdom, and even unify the northern lands! This was the cause of the current biggest crisis and catastrophe.

Of course, Old Bayer hadn't said everything. Some things Leylin had gathered from his descriptions.

'New nobles wish to rise, and older ones are unwilling to let go of their status and land. There's an obvious backlash! The orcs wouldn't let go of this opportunity, which is why the human world is now in chaos. The external support the northern lands get is very little, and from the looks of it the past few decades have not been calm...'

A slight smile rose on his lips, 'It's good that things aren't calm. It's better that things aren't calm!' As a foreign noble, it was still impossible for Leylin to get into the core of Silvermoon and obtain knowledge limited to high-ranked or legendary wizards, even as a middle-ranked wizard.

No matter where nobles or wizards were from, they all were prejudiced against foreigners. This still held true even in Silvermoon that preached openness and freedom.

Under normal circumstances, unless Leylin stayed here for a few centuries and went through life and death situations for the city and signed a large number of unfair contracts, he would not have hope of entering the core of the government.

However, with war looming ahead, everything would change! In times of war, everything could be by-passed for the sake of victory. The usually harsh rules for advancement could be disregarded. As long as one had military merits, then advancing quickly was

possible, perhaps even to the core— But only if one did not fall before succeeding.

Hence, for Leylin as he was right now, war was a huge opportunity! It would save him a great deal of time in getting to the core of Silvermoon, and was the best path to gain high-grade and legendary spells. As for danger? Haha... When had Leylin ever been afraid?

“Tiff needs to work quickly. I’ll have to change my plans. Rather than entering the Wizards’ Guild, I’ll do all I can to become a guard of the city...”

War marked suffering for commoners, but it was a stage for heroes! With the trails of blood and elimination of rotten old organisations, there were plenty of opportunities for new organisations to rise.

Leylin was obviously going to take this opportunity. While it would bring great suffering to the people, what did that have to do with him?

‘Once I sneak into the city guard, I’m sure I can gain merits rapidly through battles in exchange for high-grade information on spells... It’ll be much faster than entering the wizard tower and slowly accumulating merits...’

The city guards belonged exclusively to the master of the city, which meant that he would directly be subordinate to the Chosen. Mystra would be another guarantee of his safety.

“I’m pretty lucky...” While Leylin was nodding inwardly, his expression suddenly changed. Old Bayer stopped the carriage and cursed, “Damn it! There’s trouble ahead!”

“Mm.” Leylin jumped off the carriage. His clairvoyance and the quality of his body now making it easy for him to see the scene ahead. There were three carriages lined up one in front of the other, and they had been surrounded by a group of creatures.

It was a group of green-skinned monsters, looking like dwarves with muscular dystrophy. Their heads were large, and their noses and mouths protruded. They were mostly naked, holding wooden clubs, rocks and all sorts of weapons as they surrounded and attacked the carriages.

“That darned bunch of goblins are out again. Are they preparing food to tide them over for the winter?” Old Bayer cursed and laughed bitterly, “I’m afraid we’re in trouble. Those goblins have noticed us...”

The goblins in his line of sight had already discovered Leylin, and dispatched a wave of green streams that surrounded them.

Though legends stated that goblins could not even win against a child of ten or so years old, Leylin guessed that there were over 500 of them! If the numbers were vast, in the hundreds and thousands, even the weakest worm possessed terrifying strength! That wasn’t even considering the large goblins and bugbears in this wave.

These two types of goblins had bodies similar to regular humans. They even wore tattered armour, and had weapons that required elite human warriors to take care.

“For the winter? Tiding them over?”

Leylin recalled the contents of a geography book he had read before, ‘The extremely cold winters in the northern lands can even freeze the earth. Going out in these conditions means certain death! The elves and other wandering beasts in the wilderness, and even the orcs at the Sunrise Mountain Range all attack humans to build up their food reserves, and do not even mind starting wars...’

This was a battle for survival, which was why the closer to winter it was, the more these living beings would become crazed. This was because if they did not have enough food, they would be the ones dead in the end!

Chapter 885 - Summoning Spell

Leylin noted the bloodshot eyes of the goblins that were charging towards them. As winter drew near, even the weakest and most cowardly goblins would go crazy.

They were small, and it was hilarious to see a group of green-skinned, short people pouncing towards you. However, their gazes were as fierce as wolves, enough for even a retired soldier like Old Bayer to tremble in fear.

Dying at the hands of enemies was just death, but dying by the hands of goblins meant that their corpses would be dragged back for food! Old Bayer shuddered at the very thought.

“Please mount the horse and leave, my guest!” At this moment, a trace of decisiveness flashed on his face. He produced a rusty longsword from under the seat of the carriage and released the old horse that had been pulling the carriage.

“It may be a worn-out horse, but these bunch of short-legged creatures won’t be able keep up with you. After you break out of here, just go backwards. Don’t stop till you get to the harbour!”

Old Bayer passed the ropes to Leylin, turning back and now in a defensive stance, “As a noble young master, you must have learnt how to ride, yes?”

“Mm,” Leylin nodded, but did not leave since his luggage was still on the carriage.

“Can you tell me why you’re leaving your chance at survival to me?” He asked, slightly curious.

“I’m hot-blooded, that’s why! You nobles are so troublesome... Quick. Quick! There’s not much time left!”

Old Bayer yelled. The goblins had already surrounded them, so close that they could see the filth on the goblins’ green skin. Their putrid smell invaded their nostrils.

“You are a true soldier! But... I am not like those weak nobles...” Leylin calmly walked ahead. He abruptly closed his eyes, and a threatening aura burst forth.

Intimidation! A domain with the might of a dragon erupted from him, making the goblins halt their attacks immediately.

“You filthy vulgar bastards! How dare you block the way of a mighty wizard. Even death would be too kind a fate for you!”

Rumble! Rumble! Rumble! Bundles of dazzling flames abruptly appeared by Leylin’s side.

Lesser Fireball! Numerous spheres of blazing energy shot out, and then exploded amidst the group of goblins.

Rumble! Rumble! The flames ripped apart the bodies of the

goblins, throwing them everywhere together with the soil. Even those bugbears could not resist the power of magic. Numerous huge pits appeared in the ground, and the goblins then completely collapsed!

They may have gone crazy for food, but the goblins wouldn't challenge an enormous dragons. There was a warning from their very souls, that if they proceeded forward they would all die.

“Ooga!” “Ooga!” Amidst the terrified cries, Leylin's spell had murdered tens of the hundreds of goblins. The rest howled as they fled. The road was covered with the wooden clubs and stones, and some goblins were even trampled. The goblins that were grievously injured crawled in the opposite direction from Leylin, as if evading a demon.

“You're an esteemed wizard after all!” Old Bayer wiped off the cold sweat from his forehead. As someone living near Silvermoon, he was no stranger to the power of magic.

“Thank you very much!” Old Bayer sincerely thanked Leylin. If Leylin had not been around, he would be reduced to the fate of becoming goblin shit. That was not an honourable way of dying.

‘With this strength, he's probably not a disciple or elementary-ranked wizard. He's at least a mid-ranked one...’ Old Bayer thought himself.

At this moment, there seemed to be a ruckus in the carriage ahead, revealing the frightened expressions of a few female

disciples.

“Sister... I’ve used up my spell slots!” Isadora scowled miserably. Apprentices had few spell slots anyway, and the problem was that they were not that powerful. If the target was not directly hit, they could not even kill a single goblin. This was why rank 0 spells were also known as cantrips.

“Hold on! We’ll get reinforcements from Silverymoon soon!” Bessany gritted her teeth, misty rays shooting out from her hands.

Vertigo! A hobgoblin who had been charging forwards fell to the ground in a daze, dropping the wooden club in its hands. It rubbed its head, but before it could react further, someone who looked like a housekeeper used a giant axe to chop off its head.

“Good job..” A joyful expression appeared on Ena’s face, but she then saw the housekeeper being pushed to the ground by even more goblins, a few of them widening their large brown mouths to reveal sharp teeth.

“No...” Bessany wept. The sounds of gnawing had her on the verge of breaking down.

“Are we going to die here? I don’t want that! I’m a noble, and I’m a wizard. I shouldn’t die like this. M–My fate...” At the other side, Isadora looked ready to fall apart. Ena was usually quiet, but at such a crucial moment she was able to persevere. If not for her care, Isadora would long since been dragged away by the goblins.

Just as Bessany was on the verge of total despair, a carriage behind them suddenly caught her attention. Powerful spell undulations were transmitted, and a young wizard got off the carriage and took care of the goblin attack with a few fireballs.

“It’s... Leylin! We have hope!” Bessany looked ecstatic, suddenly waving the handkerchief in her hands.

“Leylin! Mister Leylin! Please save us!” The tender voice of a girl pierced the air and attracted Leylin’s attention.

“Oh, I didn’t think I’d meet acquaintances!” Leylin recognised the young ladies he had met on the ship, “Since we meet again, you’re in luck!”

Leylin didn’t mind a passing kindness. After all, he could improve their favourable impression of him. Of course, he still found these three wizard apprentices beneath him. What he truly valued was Silverymoon’s evaluation of him.

The city guards of Silverymoon would definitely investigate the incident. An impression that he was kind was much better than one that he was wicked and callous. Leylin never did anything that went against his principles. Everything was based on benefits.

“Rank 4 Beast Summoning!” Summoning rays flashed, and four wild wolves which were two metres tall jumped out of them. Spell rays flashed on Leylin’s body again, and after two more summoning spells he now had control over 12 wild wolves.

These large carnivorous animals had stiff fur, sharp canines and an astonishing jumping ability. Their eyes were filled with bloodlust.

“Charge!” With the guidance of Leylin’s spiritual force, 12 wild wolves charged towards the group of goblins that had already crumbled mentally.

Awoo! Awoo! Wolf cries could be heard faintly in the distance. As their gleaming white teeth tore at the flesh of the slower goblins. There were even miserable shrieks from the goblins that had fallen from the ground and been torn to pieces, further causing others to flee.

With Leylin’s attainments in his spiritual force, controlling the wild wolves was no issue. Under his command, the direction in which the goblins fled was controlled, and they began to pounce towards the carriages ahead.

“Ooga!”

The large hobgoblin ahead roared, smashing the head of a deserter with a mace in its hands, but that did nothing to deter those who were now frantic. It was quickly drowned out by the goblins.

The hundred goblin deserters who had surrounded Leylin darted into the goblin formation behind, resulting in great disorder!

Though goblins weren't orderly beings from the start, they had orders to attack and withdraw. Now, however, they were in great disarray. Howling and trampling could be noticed everywhere, and even the hobgoblins and bugbears found themselves useless.

The faint howls of the wolves sounded. All of a sudden, a wild wolf perked up and threw itself at a bugbear, its sharp canines biting through its neck. Under Leylin's directions, the wolves ignored the fleeing goblins, targeting the active group instead and prioritising the hobgoblins and bugbears.

Their command system completely broke down, and it was natural that the goblins were defeated. Numerous goblins abandoned the wooden clubs and rocks in their hands, fleeing in all directions and leaving behind the carriages and survivors.

Only 8 remained of the 12 wild wolves under Leylin. All of them had injuries, but Leylin did not feel bad for them. After the spell dissipated, they would return to the place they had come from. If they died, then so be it.

‘Even if it's a mid-ranked wizard, it's not that easy to defeat 500 or so goblins...’ Old Bayer's eyes were filled with astonishment and shock, ‘That last attack in particular had strategy to it! Is that the art of command that the corps leader once spoke of?’

Leylin was also quite satisfied with the results. Casting suitable spells at opportune moments was something all wizards had to learn. Being able to disperse this group of goblins at the most minimal cost and limiting the casualties of the attack wolves was something that made him proud.

“Are you alright?” Of course, he limited his pride to that single thought. Leylin had the abundant experiences of his main body and if he couldn’t manage even this he should just have killed himself.

“We’re alright. Thank you, Leylin!” Bessany thanked him gratefully, eyes reddening as she began to bawl over a destroyed corpse nearby, “Sob... sob... Uncle Eita...”

This corpse already had several parts missing, and there were also many small bite marks. It looked exceedingly horrifying. This was the masterpiece left by the goblins from before. If Leylin had arrived a little later, everyone in the carriages would have been reduced to this state.

The aftermath had Ena and Isadora quivering in fear as they expressed their gratitude to Leylin over and over again.

Chapter 886 - Enlist

Leylin and Old Bayer were speechless at the scene before them.

The victims' remains were collected, unable to be buried here lest they were dug out by goblins. They would be taken to Silverymoon City, given their final rites and blessings by clerics, and then buried.

“Thank you, Lord Leylin! Are you a mid-ranked wizard?” Bessany had recovered, and her eyes had swollen to the size of walnuts.

“Yes, I suppose so. I’m also going to Silverymoon City to study,” Leylin looked at the scenery outside and indifferently replied.

After meeting Bessany and the others, and since they were going to the same place, Leylin naturally did not mind accompanying her. The others happily welcomed him with open arms, as that last attack had scared them into cowardice. Without Leylin’s protection, perhaps no one would dare to continue on the journey.

The young ladies in the carriage were all surprised, it was rare to find a mid-ranked wizard as young as Leylin after all.

“How amazing... I always thought that mid-ranked wizards were all white-bearded grandfathers...” Isadora exclaimed. She’d actually recovered quite quickly.

“It’s nothing, there are many more wizards who are more gifted

than I am. Mm, there will be many of them in Silverymoon City,” Leylin replied modestly, and after chatting for a while the atmosphere of the carriage grew more solemn.

After all, a mid-ranked wizard was a big deal to minor nobles. Isadora and the others did not dare to say anything more in fear of offending him. Bessany seemed as if she was about to speak, but she was not able to say anything until they reached Silverymoon City.

Leylin understood her intentions, as she had recently told him on the boat that she was looking for a tutor. However, he would gain no benefits from taking her on as his apprentice, and it was not something that could be done with no extra trouble. Where would Leylin even find the time? As a result, he could only pretend that he did not know.

.....

“You were attacked by a goblin swarm?” A patrol officer from Silverymoon City seemed to take the matter very seriously, and had personally come to register them. “I understand, our city patrol will soon leave on their watch. The monsters in the wilderness have increased greatly in recent times, you must all be more careful.”

A clerk began to record the identities of Leylin and the others as well as their ranks. When he got to Leylin, his pen paused, “Wizard, please show me your proof of identity...”

“Mm,” Leylin nodded, taking out his proof of nobility as well as his wizard insignia and handing it to him, which immediately made the clerk cry out in surprise.

“Please take back your identification, mid-ranked Lord Wizard!” A rank 10 wizard was uncommon even in Silvermoon City, especially one who looked as young as Leylin. It was actually rather scary.

“Good, I want to join the Silvermoon City guard, do you know where I can enlist?” Leylin asked with a smile.

“You want to join the city guard?” It wasn’t just Bessany and the others that were extremely astonished. Even the officer from earlier walked over, attentively sizing Leylin up.

“Yes, I hold Lady Hope in the highest esteem, and I would love the atmosphere of Silvermoon City. I hope that I can fit in here.” This Lady Hope was the ruler of Silvermoon City. Her name was Alustriel, and she was a tolerant and good person who was one of the Chosen of Mystra.

It was rumoured that this city ruler had a very liberal attitude towards her subordinates from different races. She very much enjoyed disguising herself as an ordinary person outside of her palace to observe the lives of common folk, which won her the support of the lower classes.

Naturally, Leylin was telling a bald-faced lie. His true purpose was to assimilate into the lady’s troops as quickly as possible, and

make preparations for the war ahead.

News of the war had broken out. Perhaps many knew, but information would be limited to the city ruler's core organisation. This was precisely where Leylin would be able to seek benefits.

“You must be clear on this— once you truly join Silvermoon City, there will be many restrictions on your freedom, Sir!” Although the human fiefdoms all recognised the other's nobility, the nobles on the continent all traditionally thought that only those with hereditary titles and with their own territories could be considered true nobles.

It was evident that Leylin's title as an honourable viscount was not equal to the respect he got as a mid-ranked wizard. Perhaps if he really inherited Faulen Island it would be different and he'd be treated better, but Baron Jonas was hale and hearty so Leylin could only remain his heir.

Noble heirs like him were usually called sirs, and did not gain any particular privilege or preferential treatment. The office reminded Leylin of this point, and naturally made other implications.

“That won't be a problem,” Leylin calmly shook his head, indicating that he already clearly knew all of this.

Although foreign wizards could occasionally receive missions from the city governors, and receive patrol duties, it was clear that it was part of the system for outsiders. They were destined to never become part of the inner circle of governance.

When the war came, those patrolling wizards would not be able to escape their fate of forced enlistment. As a result, Leylin thought that since he would have to eventually participate in the war, it would be better to join in advance with his status as a noble heir.

The officer stared at Leylin, as if trying to predict what the wizard was trying to do. In the end, he could only grudgingly give up. Afterwards, he called another officer to take Leylin away, “In this case, Aulen, go through the procedures with this wizard Leylin.”

Even as she saw Leylin’s back disappear into the streets, Bessany retained the expression of disbelief on her face.

“He’s immediately joining the city guards? Perhaps Lord Leylin is actually a second son of a noble family, and hopes to get knighted through this method?”

Alustriel naturally had the power to confer noble titles, and in reality the authority she possessed in the north was not at all inferior to any human country’s king. She was very generous as well. For second or third sons of nobility, or even other adventurers, serving Alustriel to become a viscount was a rather good option.

As a noble wizard in the city guard, he would naturally receive more attention and preferential treatment compared to the others. What other benefits would an heir get?

“Perhaps serving as a military wizard would grant higher authority in Silvermoon City’s wizard library, and they can read even more advanced books. Lord Leylin probably had this thought in mind when he joined...” Ena shook her head from next to Bessany as she expressed her own opinion. It had to be said that although she was normally rather uncommunicative, her guess was close to the truth. However, they had their own family interests, and could not be as reckless as Leylin was and do as they pleased.

“It’s such a pity... As a wizard, we should of course immerse ourselves in the sea of knowledge, and not wander around attacking and killing,” Isadora was the most dim amongst the three, and felt that Leylin’s decision was a great pity, “Let’s not talk about this anymore. Which college should we go to? I’ve heard that Silverhand is rather good, but they don’t offer accommodation. And if we choose it...”

The three apprentice wizards very quickly forgot all about Leylin under Isadora’s influence, and began to discuss their future studies. For them, this was the truly most important issue at hand.

.....

“It really is very nice,” Leylin followed behind the officer named Aulen and sized up the facilities around him. As the city of wizards in the north, Silvermoon’s design was extremely exquisite, and was filled with a sense of artistry, borrowing from the artistic sense of the elves.

In addition, Leylin saw many different races on the streets, including dwarves, halflings, elves, pygmies, and even beast slaves. This country appeared to be very liberal.

“What, is it surprising?” Aulen smiled as she took off her helmet, revealing shiny long hair as bright as silver and pointed ears as well as fair and delicate skin. It was clear that this guard was an elf.

Although most elves heeded the call of the elven god to live in an enormous island overseas, there were still many tribes who stayed in the continent. In the north, Silverymoon City was an important elf settlement, and no more than 40% of the population was pure humans. A fifth were free elven citizens.

“Mm, it’s because I used to live in the south,” Leylin lightly explained.

Although dwarves and halflings could be seen in the Dambrath Kingdom, they were few in number. As for elves? They were the highest grade of slaves, and were very rarely seen outside.

Ever since the Baltic archipelago had fallen, Faulen Island’s Port Venus had received part of their slave trade, and there had been a few pureblood elves amongst them. Naturally, neither Leylin nor Baron Jonas would admit to this.

After that, the elf officer Aulen led Leylin to the city hall. Every year, Silverymoon attracted many wizards and outsiders into joining it, and they had a well-established process/

The procedures were completed smoothly, as Leylin's identity had not been fabricated after all. The arcane imprints on every file were completely in order.

“All done. Congratulations on becoming a member of the city guard, child!” Leylin's professor was an elderly wizard who looked very energetic. He wore a handsome military uniform which molded to his body, and had sharp eyes from many years of serving in the army.

This wizard was a battlemage, and his experience definitely far exceeded that of those who worked in laboratories. In addition, the undulations he gave off made Leylin wary of underestimating him — at the very least, these were the undulations of a high-ranked wizard!

Although talented wizards were scarce, Silvermoon City obviously didn't lack in them.

A military uniform set was handed to Leylin under the high-ranked wizard's blessings, similar to the one he wore. It only lacked the medals of honour and other military decorations.

Chapter 887 - Elven Wizard

“With the uniform, you’re now a member of the Silverymoon city guard. The magic equipment is enchanted with three uses of Mage Armour and one Cure Moderate Wounds. Please use them sparingly...”

“Yes, sir!” Leylin played his role very convincingly as he accepted the military uniform.

The uniform was soft in texture yet it felt tough and durable, and glowed with magic. Leylin couldn’t help but sigh at the luxurious and rich Silverymoon City.

Eternal enchantments were naturally very precious, so the wizard uniform was naturally limited in its uses. However, every year the guards would receive a new set, which could be considered a very good perk.

“Tell me, why did you want to join the city guard?” The elderly patrol wizard finally asked in a respectful manner. Leylin felt hidden magic undulations probing him.

‘Is this Lie Detection? It was personally cast by a high-ranked wizard as well... Such a shame that I’m the target.’ Leylin inwardly laughed coldly to himself as he raised his head and puffed out his chest, his face lightly flushing with emotion, “I wanted to quickly raise my ranking as a wizard, obtain many more wizard resources for my research and to study. I could only receive these benefits as a city guard, sir!”

The elderly wizard sensed the answer his secret spell fed back to him, and his eyes softened considerably. “Mm, you’re very honest. At ease!”

“Yes sir!” Leylin saluted smartly and respectfully withdrew himself. The elderly wizard inwardly nodded to himself at this swift and decisive reaction, ‘I haven’t seen a young man of his calibre in a very long time.’

A beam of light lit the room up once Leylin left, and a portal opened unexpectedly. A high-ranking elven wizard dressed in green exited it. The robe was embroidered with many plants, and looked almost like an ornate and exquisite dress.

“What’s the matter? Is there a problem?” The elderly wizard furrowed his brows together.

“No, I’ve investigated the recruit’s background. He is the heir of the Faulen family of Dambrath, and he matches the major image as well!” The elf nodded lightly, and continued in a graceful voice, “In addition, he has shown a powerful aptitude for magic since he was a child, and passed the rank 10 wizard certification when he was 18 years old.”

“Impossible! He’s already rank 11, his speed of advancement makes us in the older generation blush with shame,” the elderly wizard smiled wryly, “So you’re saying that there aren’t any problems with him?”

“I can only determine that there are none at the present. After all, we don’t have any conflicts with those human kingdoms in the south. As for his temperament, his reason of choosing to join us for more advanced magic spells is acceptable.”

The elven wizard nodded, “This sort of genius wizard will be a huge advantage for us in the future. Remove some limits on him for a few basic resources.”

“Understood,” The elderly wizard nodded solemnly. As a high-ranked wizard of Silvermoon City, he had already begun to anticipate the dangers the lay in the future.

.....

“Congratulations, wizard Leylin!” Aulen congratulated Leylin on the outside, seeing him clutch the military uniform.

“You are now one of the patrol wizards in our city guard. A benefit of being a new recruit is the private accommodation in our barracks. You can set up a small laboratory in there, and Silvermoon City’s wizard database will be open to you. You have three days to report to duty at the barracks.” Aulen began to explain several things of note to Leylin.

Given that patrol wizards were fully integrated into the military structure of the city, and they even had restrictions on their freedom, they received excellent benefits and a great salary. With him being a noble genius, Leylin obtained even more than normal.

“Although we’re part of the city guard, we usually don’t have much else to do apart from a few patrols and inspections. I’m hosting a banquet in five days, and my hand-made scallion pancakes are really very good... I hope you can come, I can introduce a few people to you!” As an elf, Aulen had a long lifespan. However, she did not seem to renounce her desire for art and beauty, and still enjoyed life pleausurably.

Leylin could easily discern her character from her appearance and other aspects. On the other hand, it was difficult to find an elf’s gender without the A.I. Chip or spiritual force scans.

Aulen clearly regarded Leylin as a true colleague, extending this benevolent invitation.

“Of course, thank you for inviting me,” Leylin thanked her sincerely.

After he parted ways with Aulen, Leylin strolled around Silverymoon City, in his hand a map that she’d given him. As it was a city of wizards, there were a lot of them out on the streets. Many of the shops nearby sold magical resources as well.

Leylin leisurely walked into a shop and looked at the magic materials inside a transparent crystal showcase.

‘Mm, I’ve almost used up all of my magic materials, I should replenish them,’ Leylin looked at a few materials which looked like blue crystals, ‘This blue diamond is very pure, I never thought I would see this inside a normal shop in Silverymoon City...’

Leylin called the shopkeeper over and replenished all the magic materials he was lacking. Of course, they were only his most basic resources. He later headed towards the sections with magic potions and alchemical reagents.

‘There are a lot of low-grade potions and limited-use alchemical items, however there are very few premium products. Perhaps I can work a bit harder to find some,’ Leylin nodded to himself, noting the sky-high prices written below the high-grade alchemical items.

Rank 10 and fifth level spells were a very important threshold in alchemy. This was because of Permanency, a rank 5 spell which could make any spell effects permanent.

Permanency was something one couldn’t do without when they wished to practice making magic items and everlasting alchemical items.

Even in Silverymoon City, wizards who could use rank 5 spells were not exactly a dime a dozen, and there were even fewer who had high attainment in alchemy. As a result, the extremely high price of high-ranked magic items was understandable.

‘In addition, as the war draws closer, those high-ranked healing potions and completed sets of magic items which can rapidly increase strength will naturally soar in price. For the same reason, the price of raw materials will drop.’ Leylin couldn’t help but stroke the Ring of Wizardry on his right hand. If he auctioned his

ring, which was nearly legendary, it was sure to create a violent commotion.

‘Perhaps, I can refine a few toys to earn some money...’ Wizards would never turn their backs on earning more wealth, and Leylin was the same. To become a Legend required the support of enormous wealth and resources, and poor little boys who dreamt of soaring in advancement after putting in back-breaking effort were just dreaming up a fantasy.

“In comparison, low-ranked wizards and apprentices can only undertake the most basic processing tasks, and they don’t earn much from it. It would be difficult for them to maintain their lifestyle and continue with more advanced studies,’ Leylin thought about this indifferently, before taking out a gold card account from the church of wealth.

Just when the serving girl had respectfully left, several other acquaintances had entered.

“Wizard Leylin!” Bessany called out in astonishment, with her Ena and her sister.

“Wow! That’s a gold card from the goddess of wealth! Only those with property worth at least 10,000 gold coins can have it...” Isadora’s eyes were fixed on the gold card in Leylin’s hand, and countless stars seemed to appear in her eyes. She only regained her senses once Ena pinched her hand.

“Oh, it’s you. Have you entered a college?” Leylin asked

indifferently.

“We’ve already registered at ‘Oakleaf’, their tuition is cheap and they have inexpensive student accommodation as well. We’ve come to buy some materials,’ Bessany had been similarly shocked by Leylin’s net worth, but she felt that this level of wealth was appropriate for a mid-ranked wizard.

Although she was still a little bitter in her heart of hearts, Bessany still managed to smile, “Has Lord Leylin joined the city guard?”

“It’s alright to just address me as Leylin,” Leylin appeared very amiable and approachable, “As for the city guard, I have of course become a patrol wizard. I hope I can still meet you all in the future.”

Every wizarding college in Silvermoon had its own assignments, and the compensation for joining the city guard on their patrols was very generous. If the three of them continued to stay here, they would certainly have the chance to meet Leylin again.

“Really? That’s amazing! I wonder where Mister Leylin lives, I hope I can come and visit soon,” Bessany bit the bullet and decided to seize the opportunity.

“Visit?” Leylin looked at the little girl and shook his head, “My residence is in the military barracks. I’m afraid that without a pass, you cannot enter.”

After hearing this, the little girl's eyes were filled with disappointment.

“However, I'm preparing to buy some property in Silverymoon City, to begin alchemical experiments and the like. If you agree, we can meet there.”

“I agree! Of course I agree!” Bessany immediately shouted, and her face flushed immediately, “What I mean is that... The three of us are very willing!”

Establishing a relationship with a mid-ranked wizard was a very good decision, so Ena and her sister both nodded as well.

“Very well!” Purchasing reagents and collecting resources, as well as selling the products afterwards were all tedious tasks. Leylin had long prepared to employ a few apprentices to do this. If they were already acquaintances, then it would be even better.

Chapter 888 - Moonwood

A year passed very quickly.

North of Silverymoon, in the enormous Moonwood. Gigantic trees which towered into the clouds hid the moonlight filtering through them. The still pitch-black surroundings filled one with a sense of foreboding.

A small squadron with both humans and elves wearing the uniform of Silverymoon city guards were now pushing their way through Moonwood without rest.

“It’s here!” The squadron leader, Aulen, parted a thick shrub and saw dark brown blood stains on the ground, with a grave look in her eyes.

“Leylin,” she turned and looked at the patrol wizard behind her.

Detect Evil! Leylin was currently clad in his wizard uniform, and looked very dignified and solemn with a mature air about him.

Sss! Sss! Black streams of air began to soar, centering on that particular area, before it pointed to somewhere in the distance.

“Stay vigilant!” Aulen said in a low voice, and at her call the others gripped their weapons tightly. Even Leylin had a very grave expression on his face.

It was because this place was the Moonwood! It was a dangerous place filled with werereatures who believed in the god of the hunt, Malar. They had formed a powerful tribe called the Blackblood, and hated the civilised life of Silverymoon City.

The guard's skirmishes with the werereatures had turned to battles, and they had become the biggest complication apart from an invasion by Sunrise Mountain's orc empire.

"I see you!" Aulen and the other members followed the spell guide to the entrance of a pitch-black mountain cave. Aulen quickly gestured to Leylin.

With the mutual understanding they'd developed over a period of time, Leylin nodded his head. The surrounding members involuntarily let out a breath of relief, and shortly after Leylin pointed towards the middle of the cave.

Light! A blindingly white light momentarily illuminated the area, and several crossbows with Spellslayer Arrow loaded were aimed there.

Under the brilliant light, they swept through the cave with a single glance. However, there was not a soul in sight apart from some ragged clothes and a human skeleton on the floor.

The clothes were severely damaged, and the style could be vaguely related to a city guard uniform. Several scraps were even found covered in mottled bloodstains which had turned dark brown.

“Kell Rosa. This is the missing bowman,” Aulen took out an emblem from the rags of clothes bearing the name, and although Leylin thought it looked like a dog tag, he pensively muttered, “This arrangement, is that the ritual of the god of the hunt? Those wretched werecreatures!”

The god of the hunt, Malar, was one whose name many were too scared to mention. Although he was a weaker god, he very much enjoyed slaughter. His believers were a bunch of savage werecreatures.

They were different from orcs in that werecreatures only retained part of their beastly characteristics, and they had some unknown hereditary disease. From Leylin’s view, they looked like the symptoms of genetic instability. It was rumoured that these werecreatures came from the laboratories of a wizard, and Leylin was in favour of this opinion.

The suffering that the werecreatures went through made their minds more prejudiced, and they were filled with hatred towards other living beings. As a result, they enjoyed slaughter, and they just so happened to hold the same view as the god of the hunt.

There was a chance that captured orcs could become slaves, but as for werecreatures, this was just a dream. Moonwood was the gathering place for the werecreatures, and they occupied the entire north of it. Blackblood was large enough to threaten Silverymoon.

The ruler of Silverymoon City, Lady Hope, due to her kind heart

and other considerations, had once actively sent out bowmen in the hope of improving the lives of those residents of Moonwood, but they had frequently been attacked.

This Kell had been one of the unfortunate ones.

“Kell Rosa was a loyal, brave ranger. The suffering of the world can no longer tarnish your soul, may you go in peace to the kingdom of god...” Aulen prayed. Other than being a powerful ranger, she was also a cleric.

As Aulen prayed, Leylin and the other squadron members lowered their heads one after the other in tribute.

It was at this moment that Leylin’s eyes suddenly widened.

“Someone’s there!” The thief in their squadron was the second one to notice, and a dagger immediately flew into the shadows.

A dull whining sound came from the shadows like a wild animal’s growl, and the nearby tree leaves began to tremble.

“It’s a werecreature!” An armoured fighter went over to brush away what was obscuring the werecreature, and only saw a bloodstain. Still, the beast fur nearby was very conspicuous.

Those werecreatures had innately inherited some unknown disease, but at the same time they possessed tremendous life force and other strange abilities. It was rumoured they’d been created by

a Legend.

“Our task was to search for them, not to kill! The werecreature must have gone to find its comrades, we must all leave for the time being,” Aulen held her elven rapier at her waist, but finally they left without a choice.

Playing hide and seek with the werecreatures in the Moonwood was something only an insane person would do. They were very good hunters, and with the advantage of being in their homeground, unless the entire main force came with high-ranked wizards as well as Legends to clear the path, they could push through the Moonwood.

Although Aulen and the others retreated very quickly, the werecreatures were soon about to overtake them.

The roars of wild animals came from all around them, and all the damned werecreatures hid in the shadows of the trees. All the squadron members had unsightly expressions on their faces.

“Damn! Leylin!” Aulen took off the longbow on her back and notched an arrow with a grey eagle feather to it.

“Mm. Enchant Weapon!” Leylin and Aulen had worked together many times, and they had established a deep rapport. A burst of magic spread across the arrowhead.

Ss! Elves were excellent at archery, and Aulen was a ranger. The

minute she let go of the bowstring, a muffled grunt could be heard in the darkness and an enormous shadow fell from the branch. While a common arrow naturally would not penetrate the defenses of a werecreature, a magic arrow would have no problems doing so.

Enchant Weapon! Forcefield! Bull's Strength! With Leylin's tireless actions, many of the squadron members glowed with the light of amplification spells.

"Well done!" Aulen praised him. In reality, she had always been afraid that this new colleague would be haughty and arrogant because of his status as a genius wizard, and would not listen to her command. However, Leylin's performance clearly exceeded her expectations.

Not only did he obediently obey orders, he even fit in very well with the other squadron members—he really did not seem like a wizard at all!

'Perhaps after we return, Leylin's titles should be changed... With Leylin's qualifications and contributions, he might be promoted this month,' Aulen thought to herself, but afterwards pushed the matter to the back of her mind. No matter how much she thought about it, they had to make it out alive before they had the privilege of enjoying promotions.

"Kill them!" A jarring sound of metal scraping against metal came from the darkness, and the surrounding werecreatures seemed to go mad as they charged towards Leylin.

“Follow me, we need to break out of this!” Aulen gritted her teeth, and the bow and arrow in her grasp shot out arrow after arrow. Once done, she tossed the bow away and replaced it with a slender rapier that had been hanging at her waist.

As a patrol wizard, Leylin was protected at the centre of their formation, and did not suffer any injuries.

‘In battle, a wizard’s spell slots should be used to serve their comrades. However, a wizard’s spell slots are limited, and so they must leave their own safety in the hands of their teammates. In this situation, unless they were good friends who would give their lives in return, it would be almost impossible for them to remain on good terms with one another.’

“I’m almost out of spell slots!” He shouted gravely, but in reality he was lying. Whether it was spiritual force which would allow him to directly use the first few ranks of spells or the Ring of Wizardry, Leylin still retained a great deal of power. However, he had to keep it a secret.

“How many spell slots do you have remaining?” Aulen looked at Leylin anxiously. At the moment, she did not have the time to even wipe the traces of blood off her face. She no longer had the grace and elegance of an elf.

Without the support of spells, they basically could not break through the siege of these werecreatures.

“I still have Cloudkill, and I only have rank 1 and rank 0 cantrips left,” Leylin replied with a solemn expression on his face, “In this forest, I don’t have the ability to meditate and recover.”

“Damn! Everyone, immediately break through the siege and run for your lives. Whoever can make it out will make it. Leylin, follow me and immediately cast your spells once most of the others have left!”

Aulen had another cleric in her squadron. Jinx’s palm lit up radiantly with a divine spell. Although Aulen’s rank as a cleric was very low, the divine spells of a cleric did not require spiritual force and mana. One only needed to pray every day to obtain divine spell slots, and it could be considered very convenient.

After several healing spells, the other fighters all seemed to have recovered their vitality one after the other. Even the small wounds they had accrued on their bodies seemed to have been restored.

With this power, Aulen and the others finally broke through the tight encirclement.

“Now!” Aulen roared.

Cloudkill! Leylin pointed behind his back, and the terrifying Cloudkill dispersed, engulfing all the werereatures within it.

“Let’s go!” The other fortunate people began to summon up their courage one after the other in the hope of making it out alive, and

followed behind Aulen.

.....

“We’ve finally made it out!” Aulen looked at the scattered squadron members behind her back with an expression of hatred.

“Those damned werecreatures, they’ve been acting up more and more frequently these days... Leylin, our escape is all thanks to you. Your spells were fully put to use and very precise, and I will include this in the report.”

Aulen looked at the distant silhouette of Moonwood with a heavy expression in her eyes. Once she turned away from it however, her expression had changed completely. “Now, let’s go home!”

Chapter 889 - Life In Silverymoon

‘Even the ordinary soldiers feel the looming shadow of war?’ Leylin nodded expressionlessly as he reflected on the issue in his mind. He didn’t remain in the barracks upon their return, instead returning to the property he’d bought.

‘I’m done with yet another mission. The contribution points I earned should be enough for me to buy that information, right?’

The database for wizards in Silverymoon could not be accessed purely with money. There were specific requirements to get things, and high-grade information on spells required contribution points to access. This was part of why Leylin had entered the city guard.

At this thought, he couldn’t help but glance at his stats.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 20. Race: Human, Rank 12 wizard. Strength: 10. Agility: 10. Vitality: 10. Spiritual force: 12. Status: Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite, Elementary Perfect Body. Spell Slots: Rank 5(3), Rank 4(5), Rank 3(7), Rank 2(???), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]

Silverymoon City was truly the birthplace of wizards in the northern lands. With ample resources and research material, Leylin was able to move up a rank just by diligently working towards it. With more information, the progress on analysis of the Weave had also advanced at lightning speed.

‘Analysis of level 3 of the Weave has already progressed to 99.99%. There’s just a little left...’ Leylin sighed as he entered the workroom.

“Good-Good morning, Mister Leylin!” Three wizard apprentices jumped up just like startled rabbits. Bessany looked a little flushed, and the sisters behind her were obviously trying to clean up the messy lab table.

“Welcome home, sir!” Bessany spoke in the end, having gathered her courage. A year of study had taught them how difficult it was to cross rank 10, which meant that this young noble in front of them had a lot of talent and status in the wizarding world.

“Mm,” Leylin nodded sternly, “I hired you at the price of ten gold kronas per month; you also have permission to use my workroom. You don’t have to feel embarrassed...”

While helping with Leylin’s work, these girls had also been attempting to train their alchemy. It was a pity that without guidance from their mentor, it was difficult for them to improve by a large extent even if they had an alchemy lab.

“Oh!” Just as Leylin’s voice sounded, Isadora cheered, “I knew Mister Leylin wasn’t a stingy person...”

“So... that’s how you thought of me in the past?” Leylin rubbed his nose, scaring Ena into dragging her sister to apologise with her. There were countless apprentices in Silvermoon City, and their

chances of finding such a good job were meagre. If not for their coincidental meeting with Leylin, the three of them wouldn't even have been able to get this position. Hence, Ena treasured her current job.

“Forget it... I was just joking!” Even if it was what he had said only in passing, the beautiful apprentices in front of him were already cowering in fear. Such was the power of a high status. This power originated from Leylin himself, and nobody could snatch it away from him.

Leylin waved his hand with waning interest, approaching the sales counter on one side and opening its magic lock.

“How have the sales of magic items been lately?” Leylin took out a black boxing glove from the locked counter. The dark hide on the surface had a chilly glint to it, and looked to conceal some sort of strength. Under the guard was an incomplete magic formation. A few parts of the circuit were obviously broken off.

“The two items we asked Hawke's Bazaar to sell have already gone on the market. We have received a total of 8000 gold coins. Based on the contract, they will receive 10% of the profits and the funds have been remitted to your account at the Goddess of Wealth's church, able to be withdrawn at any time... Also, a few other magic item shops and auctions have contacted me, saying they wish to obtain your masterpieces...” Bessany reported normally.

Leylin was a Grandmaster Alchemist in his previous life. Once he made sense of the rules of alchemy in this world and got a hold of

Permanency, his magic items were rather good. Bessany was definitely envious of Leylin given that the items he made randomly sold for thousands of gold coins.

It was a pity that she was only qualified to take care of the sales records and statistics. Whether it was delivering magic items or transferring money, this was something Leylin personally took care of with the clients. There was no way for her to interfere.

Tempted by greed, humans could abruptly gain terrifying strength and not even twitch in the face of death. Knowing this well, Leylin obviously would not give her the chance to betray him.

‘It looks like Bessany is rather skilled at this type of work. There’s some value in nurturing her...’ Leylin thought to himself, placing the boxing glove on the table while putting on a device over his eyes which was similar to a magnifying glass.

A fine powder mixed with mithril floated down softly from Leylin’s fingertips. It emitting a shiny silver luster in the ink bottle it landed in, after which Leylin used a fountain pen and dabbed at the ink before beginning to draw on the magic formation.

Bessany and the sisters immediately held their breaths, watching his actions closely. Alchemy masters all had their unique techniques. Even in Silvermoon, it was rare for people to let others watch without reservations. The other alchemy apprentices would go crazy over this if they found out!

His movements as fluid as water, Leylin quickly finished drawing the last magic formation. A radiance then appeared on his hands. With the incantation done and energy provided, the magic formation began to radiate energy that enveloped the glove.

“Now!” Leylin’s eyes shone, and he unhesitatingly cast a rank 5 spell. The gorgeous, powerful lustre of Permanency caused the girls to look intoxicated. With it, the rays from the magic formation grew in strength, and then began to be hidden within the guard.

[Beep! Glove of Strength successfully created!]

A prompt sounded from the A.I. Chip, followed by the item’s stats.

[Item Name: Glove of Strength. Weight: 525g. Materials Used: Giant Skin, Limestone, Mithril. Effects: Able to increase user’s strength by 1 point (limited to those under 10 points). Description: This is a glove filled with strength, the love of all warriors and knights. The maker used a unique technique in creating it, giving this guard even more power!]

“Hm, not bad.” An item of this rank was something Bessany and the rest could not even hope for. For Leylin, however, it was merely something to practice his skills on.

After soaking the fist guard in a solution from a glass bottle, he proceeded with the last adaptability procedures. Leylin then spoke to Ena, “Tell the people in the shop to come over and get the goods.”

“Understood, Mister!” Ena bowed respectfully and left the room.

“How is it? Did you understand?” Leylin glanced at Bessany, a teasing look in his eyes. As for Isadora, he completely ignored her.

“No! Sire’s techniques are even more profound than those of the elven masters...” Bessany unknowingly used honorifics. She obviously wanted to become Leylin’s official student, but it seemed like he had no intentions of taking her on whatsoever.

“Alchemy needs to be learnt systematically. It’s natural you can’t understand it for now...” Leylin looked at Bessany, seeing her thirst and determination towards magic. Out of the three, perhaps only she would be able to succeed.

“In that case... Are you willing to give up your pay every month and work for three hourglasses more everyday? This will be in exchange for half an hourglass’ worth of time every week being mentored on alchemy,” Leylin asked. Passing on knowledge in exchange for manual labour was common amongst high-grade wizards. There were even cases of female wizards giving up their bodies in exchange for tutoring.

“I am! Of course I am” Bessany immediately grew so ecstatic that

she kept repeating her words. With her background, truly studying alchemy was but a dream. Besides Leylin, no master would be willing to take her in as a apprentice.

“Good! Come to my room after you get off work.” Leylin nodded and headed out of the shop.

He could not keep staying here to create more magic items. Since Bessany had interest and talent in this area, there was nothing bad about teaching her.

“Congratulations, Bessany!” Behind him, Isadora’s congratulations and Bessany’s tearful delight sounded out. A ruminating smile was left on Leylin’s lips.

Things that belonged to a devil were not so easily obtained!

.....

At the heart of Silverymoon, in the Wizards’ Guild next to the palace. After passing through a series of stringent tests, Leylin came outside the wizards’ vault.

The tower genie’s robotic voice sounded, “Welcome, Lord Leylin Faulen. As a middle-ranked wizard with the army, you can view the content at the first three levels. Level four and above can be accessed through contribution points.”

The wizards’ vault was a small library, and inside a few old

wizards were reading. Leylin did not bother them as he found a book he was in the middle of. He began to read 'Exploring The Sixth Level Of The Weave.'

The A.I. Chip continued to work, recording everything he saw.

Chapter 890 - Farewell

“Tower genie, I wish to exchange contribution points for ‘A Brief Introduction To The Four Great Elements’, as well as Gandalf’s ‘Exploring the Cosmic World!’” When it was time to leave, Leylin spoke to the managing genie of the wizards’ vault.

“Lord Leylin, you now have a total of 580 contribution points. Exchanging for these two magic resources will require 80 contribution points. Continue?” the tower genie asked.

“Yes!” Leylin touched the emblem on his chest. With some secret probes, he could sense that the tower genie was communicating with the information in his emblem and refreshing it. Soon, it deducted the correct number of contribution points.

Boom! Boom! Two earthen statues walked over, holding crystal balls with information inside them.

The tower genie’s voice sounded again. “Please note: The information is only meant for the wizard to use alone. It must not be shown to outsiders, or you will be punished by the enforcers of the palace.”

Leylin already knew about this rule, and he shrugged his shoulders, taking the two crystal balls and walking out of the guild.

‘Regular wizards can only read the information on the first two levels, and there are even some restrictions on that. My

permissions are already the highest that all foreigners can get...’ Leylin sighed inside.

Whatever it was, he was still a foreigner who had enlisted for less than a year, and was only a middle-ranked wizard. While he had a little bit of a reputation as a genius, he was nothing before he had fully grown into his power.

‘All the research and procedures that are free to read in the wizards’ vault has been stored in the A.I. Chip. I need to spend contribution points for the rest...’

Short of becoming a Legend, he couldn’t access the vault free of charge. He could only use his accumulated contribution points to slowly get the information on the disciplines he wanted. Were there no war, it would have been delusional to completely obtain all the information he wanted with his current means.

However, things were different now. Leylin’s eyes glinted icily, “Soon... The shadow of war will soon be upon us...”

The advent of war was no secret. Intelligent people like Leylin could tell this was about to happen years ago, and now even the junior-most officers like Aulen had found out.

The most obvious evidence of this was the obvious decrease in the number of wizard apprentices and official wizards coming to Silverymoon. The crowd on the streets had even thinned out. The city guards had been mobilised more often recently, and they were even openly recruiting.

Of course, those who joined now would not have the great treatment that Leylin had gotten. With his own foresight and the advantage from his information, Leylin had made the most of this final chance to enlist. Now, if he was lucky, he could be recruited into the middle ranks.

However, this was obviously not what Leylin needed. What did that mean to him? What he needed was to have achievements; by unceasingly getting more contribution points and spreading his fame, he could soar straight to the inner circle of Silvermoon City.

His actions would definitely be hindered by those stubborn conservative members, which was why it was necessary to walk the less trodden path.

‘Tiff is doing well right now. He’s gathered some power that I can make use of...’ Leylin continued to scheme.

“Oh my! Isn’t this our genius foreigner from the south, mid-ranked wizard Leylin?” This peculiar voice and the sarcasm in mentioning Leylin’s title made him immediately aware of who it was.

“Commander Cassley!” He inwardly rolled his eyes, but on the surface Leylin still straightened his chest and saluted.

“Mm! I heard that you did well this time and saved Aulen and the others from a group of werecreatures. Not bad...” Standing in

front of him was a young officer. His ears were slightly pointed and he had fair skin from his elven heritage. His appearance concealed his true age.

He was a true high-ranked wizard! On top of that, he was also a higher-up amongst the city guards, and Leylin had to treat him with respect. He obviously knew that the instant he seemed disrespectful, things would be deliberately made difficult for him. Hence, all his actions strictly followed the etiquette in the army with no errors.

Seeing Leylin's display, Cassley had a shady look in his eye and even some restrained fear.

"I heard that your next mission is a punitive expedition. Work hard. Once we expand the army, it'll be a chance for you youths."

Taking the general encouragement, Leylin got out of the way and stood by the side of the road. Only after the commander vanished from the Wizards' Guild did he continue forward, sighing in relief.

Even a world with extraordinary powers was similar to ordinary human societies, with factions and power struggles. Leylin's achievements that outstripped his age already left a lot of people unhappy with him. With the quick promotions, his increasing contribution points, and the spread of his name, this discontent had reached the limits.

In order to get more opportunities, Leylin had taken the initiative and entered Aulen's faction, thereby relying on the

bigshot behind her. There was no other way around it. If he wanted to climb forward, his own strength was far from enough. It was necessary to get be backed by other factions.

Without anyone backing you, it was only a matter of time before you were eliminated. While he found this beneath him, lacking in strength Leylin could only play by the rules. In that case, was there a faction better than his own immediate superior?

By relying on Aulen and the power backing her, Leylin had been able to survive up to this point. However, this also led to him offending the other factions. The high-ranked wizard Cassley, for instance, was obviously from another faction. Leylin and Aulen had long become eyesores to him.

Of course, with Alessandro and the elders around, this competition was still positive. Nobody dared make a move in public. Hence, since Leylin had presented himself perfectly, Cassley could find no excuse to reprimand him.

“Looks like he’s going to give our team trouble in the next mission...” Leylin muttered to himself. This degree of treatment was still within the scope of the rules, and his backer must have also done something as well.

‘But he’s taking the lead to make things difficult for us and is unafraid of telling me about the dangers of the mission. Does that mean they are absolutely prepared?’ Leylin’s expression was grim. This action of his implied a 60 to 70% confidence.

Of course, Leylin was already used to concealing his strength. A plan based on his surface strength would fail to account for his true might. This alone could lead to Cassley losing everything he banked on.

“It’s a good idea to discuss this with Aulen as soon as possible, and see if the bigshot behind her can help us...” Leylin had a feeling that this was a confrontation between the two organisations, and his team had coincidentally been involved. The two sides had long since discovered the incoming battle and were now doing all they could to suppress their opponents and gather more strength.

That he was pushed to the front of the stage to become the vanguard meant things were now very dangerous. As the bannermen, they would obviously be attacked at full strength.

‘But danger is also an opportunity!’ Leylin laughed grimly to himself, ‘As long as we can get past this, the rewards won’t be meagre. How else could this be fair?’

Leylin never feared danger.

‘Leylin! Hey, hey! I’m here!’ The young girl’s tender voice attracted the interest of many people, causing them to stop and look on. However, the person who had called him out did not seem to be affected in the least, and was even waving her arms.

‘Is she finally here?’ The feeling from the devil’s mark already told Leylin the identity of this person.

He looked up and came before the female knight, “Long time no see!”

“Long time no see, Leylin!” Rafiniya was still in a knight’s attire, but there were now a few servants guiding the horse. It seemed like she had matured quite a bit in these two years, and grown a few centimetres taller. Her powerful and lush thighs immediately stopped passersby in their tracks.

It did not feel good to be ogled at like this, so Leylin brought Rafiniya away.

“You’re a wizard! I knew it; you were bluffing me all this time! Also your name is Leylin, not Ley!” Rafiniya exclaimed huffily, her personality still the same as before.

“Haha... that was all a disguise in the past!” Having been seen through, Leylin didn’t even blush.

“By the way, why are you here?” There was a huge distance between the north and the west. Leylin had reached Silverymoon ahead of Rafiniya, but the fact that she had actually come here still surprised him slightly.

“I’m travelling around now, and I heard rumours that a war’s going to happen here. I came because you were here too.” Rafiniya spoke seriously, “As a knight, my dream is to maintain justice and protect the peace of Silverymoon!”

‘I knew it...’ Leylin massaged his temples. Only foolish girls like Rafiniya would run to battlefields when there were no benefits. He glanced at the servants behind her, eyes full of pity, “With a mistress like this, it must be exhausting.”

Upon hearing this, the servants behind Rafiniya nodded vigorously, but when Rafiniya turned back, their expressions immediately changed, looking indignant.

“Struggling for a career of righteousness is all I live for!”

“The miss’ methods are correct. We support you wholeheartedly!”

“How is it? So many people are supporting my dreams! Silvermoon City will definitely win this time, and the evil orcs will definitely lose!” Rafiniya proudly raised her head.

“Yeah, yeah. Have you joined the city guard?” Leylin asked bluntly.

“Not yet. I came to meet you once I arrived!” Rafiniya answered truthfully.

“Good! I’ll introduce you to people then. How about joining my team?” Leylin suggested. With Aulen’s authority, taking a new recruit into his team was no issue.

Chapter 891 - Deliberately Making Things Difficult

While Rafiniya had a screw loose, she was still a real high-ranked knight. A hot-headed idiot like her was still useful in battle, able to take care of things on the front lines. As long as he brought up the path of knights and justice to sway her, this little lady knight would be charge forward like an enraged bull in spite of the dangers ahead.

“Well then, I’ll leave things to you!” The female knight casually spoke, making the few servants behind her turn pale.

“Miss, the master let you come out and travel, not to join the army. You’re making it hard for us to answer to the master...” the oldest servant summoned up the courage to say.

Boom! However, before he could finish his words, the the little girl’s slender fist struck his right eye directly and he toppled. The power of a high-ranked knight was not something that a mere servant could take on.

“How shameless... Too shameless...” Rafiniya’s entire body trembled, “Such a person with no heart for justice whatsoever is my servant? That’s an insult to me!”

“How about you? Anyone against it?” Rafiniya’s metallic gloves produced sharp sounds, causing the other servants to immediately shake their heads and toss the unlucky guy on the floor aside.

“There’s no problem now!” Rafiniya clapped.

“You guys... come with me!” Leylin had a dark cloud over his head but did not say much in the end as he led the way.

.....

In the barracks.

“Hey, Leylin! There’s trouble...” Aulen’s anxious expression did not ease up, and she didn’t seem to notice Rafiniya who was behind him. She looked completely disheartened.

“What’s going on? Is this the mission that Cassley messed up further?”

“You know about it already? That bastard mixed blood! If not for his sorcery, it would have been impossible for him to become a high-ranked wizard even in three centuries...” Aulen cursed. Life in the army had caused the elves to lose their original elegance.

“Skill with sorcery? Bastard mixed blood? Haha... Aulen, I never knew you were good at swearing...” Leylin chuckled. The A.I. Chip had already told him Cassley had both elven and giant dragon blood in him.

With three bloodlines, he truly was a mixed blood. Giant dragons

and elves were both proficient spellcasters, and with their blood Cassley had become a high-ranked wizard before he turned two hundred. That was a classic example of relying on the heavens to succeed.

“Oh, there’s also an outsider here! My apologies!” It was only now that Aulen saw Rafiniya behind Leylin. The female knight was astonished by the profanities the elf had spouted.

“This is Rafiniya, a high-ranked knight and an old friend of mine. She wishes to join us.” Leylin introduced her to Aulen, as this was basic courtesy amongst nobles. “Rafiniya, this is Aulen. She’s not usually like this...”

“A high-ranked knight? Not bad, not bad! Is this the external help you got for this mission?” Aulen’s eyes brightened.

“No! It’s actually just a coincidence. Besides, I don’t know the contents of the mission in detail yet...” At the mention of proper business, Aulen turned grim.

“It’s an extermination mission. They want us to annihilate a camp of werereatures, with at least five high-ranked Professionals and even possibly Malar priests. Damn it, it’s basically telling us to go on a suicide mission...” Aulen spoke aggrievedly.

“How about that elven wizard? Has he managed to get us anything?” Leylin was referring to their backer.

“He seems quite determined now. A team of theirs with powerhouses is also going on a dangerous mission, and the upper house as well as master of the city have approved it...” Aulen laughed wryly, “All that he’s obtained for us is a group of new soldiers and some supplementary items. We still have to do the mission though.”

“Never mind the new troops. They aren’t that powerful and might affect our rapport. What do you think about roping Rafiniya in?” Leylin suggested.

Aulen had the same thoughts as Leylin, and she nodded, “Mm, that’s what I was thinking! As for those stupid new recruits... I know them better than you do...”

“Well then... Are you willing to enter the city guards and join my team, Miss Rafiniya?” Aulen asked seriously.

“Of course! Spreading justice and punishing evil is the reason I’m travelling around, and my lifelong path as a knight!” Rafiniya’s face seemed to glow.

“Great. Welcome! From today onwards, you are a comrade that we can rely on.” Aulen exclaimed seriously. She seemed to have a favourable impression of this female knight whose thoughts were incomparably pure. Rafiniya had always been very carefree, and that personality allowed her to integrate into the team quickly.

Upon noticing this, Leylin asked for information regarding the mission and headed out of the camp. He walked along the streets

aimlessly, suddenly disappearing into a little alley.

A layer of dark magic light began to spread around Leylin's body and completely concealed his figure.

In a private house nearby, Leylin caught sight of Tiff.

"Young master!" Tiff had now swapped to another face and was wrapped up in a black coat, emitting a strange aura. After seeing Leylin's arrival, he immediately bowed respectfully and set up a powerful isolating barrier.

With his strength nearing the legendary realm, nobody would be able to see through it unless the Chosen herself decided to stalk him by intention.

'Is he already about to break through?' As the 'god' that Tiff believed in, Leylin had a great understanding of Tiff's feelings. The energy in Tiff's body had already almost been completely purified, and he was truly only one step away from becoming a Legend.

Observing the process of someone else becoming a Legend was a huge source of enlightenment and motivation for Leylin now.

'The realm of Legends holds true power in the World of Gods. It's also the beginning on one's path to godhood, not as easy as purifying one's power...' While Tiff was not purely a wizard, there was still much information that Leylin could make use of. Light flashed in the depths of his eyes, and Tiff's stats and aura

undulations were accurately copied by the A.I. Chip.

“Mm. How have things been lately?” Leylin indifferently asked.

“I’ve taken in more followers, though a few organisations have begun to take notice of this... Also, news of the incoming war can no longer be hidden. It’s quickly being spread amongst the regular people, and the price of rations and weapons in the black market has been steadily rising...” Tiff reported conscientiously.

He had initially been a loyal believer of the winged serpent god, Kukulkan. He now treated Leylin as the saint of his god and his substitute, so if his loyalty was quantified it would be at the highest possible value.

With Tiff’s strength approaching the legendary realm, he was one of Leylin’s trump cards. Leylin sent him out to gather strength, ready to make a move at the most opportune moment. He was someone who had been able to do as he pleased for a long time due to his strength. His abilities and schemes were marvellous, and with Leylin’s financial help, the plans proceeded smoothly.

After reselling some rare and scarce items, he had even earned much wealth.

“The war has yet to break out, and we still have our most important mission. Once the invasion of the orcs begins, nobody will have time to watch us closely...”

Leylin rubbed his chin, “Perhaps our mighty and benevolent city master will announce something that can coincidentally rid our group of all suspicion...”

War was comparable to allowing the people to carry arms, and demanding that they bring their own rations and take care of themselves. When the situation was dire, the city master probably would not raise too many objections against these empty promises of titles.

“Understood, young master, your will is my command.” Tiff nodded gravely to show his understanding.

“Also, there’s a large base in the dark forest. Do you remember it?” Leylin immediately produced a map used by the military and pointed at the location where the mission was to be carried out.

“This place...” Tiff’s brows furrowed, as if he had been put in a difficult position. Such an expression on Tiff’s face meant that something was abnormal, and it could even be dangerous.

“What is it?” Leylin immediately asked.

“This is a werereature camp on the outskirts. I’ve had dealings with them before...” The people Tiff took in were obviously not good, pure people. They were the elites of the dark world, and werereatures were included on the list.

It was completely normal for him to have had dealings with the

Moonwood or even the Blackblood tribe before.

“How powerful are they?” Something that put even a near-legendary being on the spot was naturally not easy to take care of. Even knowing that Cassley would definitely give him the most difficult mission, the difficulty it posed seemed to have surpassed Leylin’s expectations.

“There’s a being there that even I feel is dangerous. Also, they have priests of the God of the Hunt there...” A being that could make Tiff feel danger was at least on the same level as him. On top of that, if this organisation had a priest, then they would be at a completely different level than before.

“If young master must attack this base, please allow me to follow you in secret!” Evidently, Tiff was not optimistic at all about Leylin’s mission.

“Alright. Add the more powerful ones you’ve recruited as well, and have them tail us secretly.” Leylin did not try to make things hard for himself. He was merely a rank 12 wizard now, and there was quite a number of people who were more powerful than him in Silverymoon.

“However, compared to the great tide of orcs and orc Legends, as well as the god backing them, the Blackblood tribe is rather weak...” Leylin sighed.

Given how difficult this mission was, Leylin would probably rise to the middle ranks of Silverymoon after it was completed.

Chapter 892 - March

‘Cassley... I’ll remember this!’ Leylin obviously wasn’t someone who’d take a blow lying down. Everything Cassley had done to him would be returned tenfold, even a hundredfold! Wasn’t everything possible in times of war?

.....

As the cold wind whistled, a small team slowly set out from the gates of Silverymoon, radiating a solemn atmosphere. Although they know that the journey was perilous, they could not escape their orders. Such was the sorrow of enlisting in the army.

“Rafiniya, knights can’t be mounted in the Moonwood. There are too many trees and brambles...” Aulen was still telling Rafiniya about things she should take note of.

“Don’t worry! My skill is passable. I don’t need to work together with a warhorse...” Rafiniya patted her black sharkskin scabbard, looking relaxed.

Mounts were usually half the strength of many high-ranked knights, but things were different with Rafiniya. After her previous experiences, she had deliberately trained herself in this area. She still retained much of her original strength even without a mount.

She was on a completely different level when compared with those who could only become heavy-armoured fighters once they

lost their horses.

“That’s good... Let me introduce you to the main forces of the troops!” Aulen exclaimed happily while introducing her to the rest of the men.

“You already know Leylin, our wizard. That is our scout captain, the thief Lanshire...” Aulen pointed towards a slender figure wearing tight-fitting clothing with half his face covered.

“Then there’s the brothers who lead our warriors, Ogg and Otto.” As the defensive forces in the team, Ogg and Otto had sturdy muscles and carried halberds, claw hammers and other heavy weapons.

Behind them were almost twenty elite warriors wearing steel armour like chainmail. They were rank 3 warriors or greater, and could be considered rather strong.

“Hello!” Ogg and Otto smiled and greeted her. Their expressions were very innocent, a stark contrast to their insanity in battle.

“And then there’s our healer and the beauty of the team, the cleric Jinx!” Aulen approached a blonde girl. She wore white cleric robes, and sat on a white horse summon.

“Sister Aulen... don’t tease me. What do you mean by beauty...” Jinx blushed slightly. With her cascading golden hair, she had a calm aura.

“We used to be a team of 50, but due to a bitter fight, tens of our men died. We haven’t had the time to replace them...” Aulen brought Rafiniya to take a look at the team, looking desolate and regretful. Even she did not dare bring in new friends when they were about to carry out a dangerous mission, not to mention that there could be spies in their midst.

“Rafiniya, you’re a knight. As usual, you will be assigned two servants and four grooms. Every month, you’ll receive an extra salary for them. Don’t hesitate to report your name,” Aulen waved her hand generously.

“I only have four servants. Sister Aulen, just do what you need to...” Rafiniya answered without care. With her background, she naturally did not think much of the allowance from the army. However, for many commoner knights, this was great wealth.

In order to get more gold coins, commoner knights did not mind reducing the number of servants and grooms while still earning the same amount. Leylin could not help but sigh— embezzling money by adding nonexistent servants to the payroll was a common situation everywhere, it seemed. It didn’t need to be specially taught.

“Alright then. We’ll treat it as two servants and two grooms...” Aulen watched Rafiniya attentively, but discovered she was not acting strangely. She could not help but shake her head, feeling ashamed of her thoughts.

“Oh look, are those goblins?” Rafiniya’s mind was obviously not on this matter, and her attention was already on something else.

There were a few green-skinned creatures in the wilderness, looking exactly the same as the goblins Leylin had seen before. They were staring at the group greedily but did not dare charge forward, seemingly timid and afraid.

“Yes. Don’t worry, they wouldn’t dare attack fully-armed human troops...” Aulen exclaimed, and then watched speechlessly as Rafiniya urged her horse to go forth. She then looked towards Leylin, who shrugged his shoulders helplessly.

“Alright, I finally understand why you had such a reluctant expression when introducing Rafiniya to me...” Aulen urged her horse to Leylin’s side and rolled her eyes.

.....

Though the journey was more fun with the lady knight Rafiniya, they were now increasingly closer to the Moonwood. The atmosphere in the group grew increasingly solemn.

Night came, and tens of tents were erected in the army camp. Heaps of bonfires were ignited in an orderly manner, with simple army rations cooking above them. Leylin had opened a can and poured solid fish floss into the boiling soup.

“It’s fish floss! I often ate this while travelling in the south!”

Rafiniya, who was seated beside Leylin, twitched her nose.

“Is that so?” Leylin smiled slightly, not revealing that he was the master of the supply chain. Due to the location and matured supply chain, the church of wealth hadn’t left the Faulen Family alone in its work. They’d invested in them to gain most of the ownership rights to the fish floss.

With the support from their tremendous wealth and network, sales of fish floss had extended to the north in a few years. It had even become the required army rations in Silverymoon, which made him feel rather honoured.

While imitations had begun to appear in the market, the quantity, scale and techniques could not compare with the shrine of wealth. Hence, the profits would be maintained for a long time. Leylin received these updates as the family sent him money every year.

Although he was improving himself, Leylin hadn’t relinquished control of his family and other organisations. Becoming a Legend, or even a high-ranked wizard would be enough for him to do as he pleased in the World of Gods, but his goal wasn’t just personal improvement.

He wanted to become a god, and personal strength wasn’t enough for that. Even the great gods who were high above needed support from followers.

‘Actually, the rules to become a god in the World of Gods aren’t

that strict...' With Leylin's foresight, he could obviously see through many things, 'If I become a new god, it will be easier to get support from the world origin force. A thousand pious believers are enough to support the birth of a new god. It's the old ones facing more trouble. They need to expand about tenfold, and can easily become enemies to other gods with similar roles...'

Leylin's eyes glinted, 'Of course, there's an easier way to become a god; through luck! If I manage to obtain divine power crystals as well as the godhood of a fallen god, it would be easy to become one... But even after becoming one that way, I would still be a mortal. Resurrecting as a god will not be a certainty...'

Leylin actually thought little of these gods that had gotten lucky. Comprehension of the powers of laws could not be completed in a day. Even high-ranked Legends may not be able to fully comprehend the power of laws, much less those who had once been regular people.

It was like using a child's strength to brandish a huge hammer. The result would be obvious.

Of course, Leylin was different. His main body had the experiences of a near rank 7 Magus and assistance from the A.I. Chip. If he ascended to godhood with weak divine power, it was still possible for him to embrace and support it.

'It's a pity... Something as good as the heavens granting divinity no longer exists... The gods will never be forgotten. Even if they die from unnatural causes, godhoods and divine weapons will still land in the hands of the gods that killed them. It can't be given to

others...

‘Comprehension of another law like this will only pollute my path...’ Leylin looked incomparably grim. He was still a Warlock at heart, and followed the path of Magi. Rank 7 Magi needed to completely grasp the power of one law, and rank 8 Magi needed to comprehend multiple laws.

Only by finding their own path and smelting the power of laws into oneself would a person find themselves at the peak of rank 8, peering into the realm of rank 9. With a rough idea of the path, Leylin wasn’t willing to mix in more laws.

‘Unless it’s a law of divinity that I need, even should a godhood with powerful divine power dangle before my eyes, I won’t pay it any mind,’ Leylin gave a deep sigh.

“Heh... what are you thinking about?” His expression naturally aroused the interest of Rafiniya beside him.

“I’m wondering when this fish soup will be done.” Leylin shook his head. If he were to tell the female knight beside him that he was considering becoming a god, she would definitely think he was a lunatic. Someone who wasn’t even a rank 15 high-ranked wizard dared say that he wanted to become a god? Even those Legends did not have the guts to do so!

“Mm, almost there.” Rafiniya breathed in deeply. She obviously had more experience from before, and seemed to have some culinary skills.

“My apologies for bothering the two of you!” Jinx came over at this moment, her pure white robes gliding across the grass. She radiated a sense of exceptional beauty.

“Captain Aulen told me to notify all officers who are squadron leaders or higher to come to the central tent immediately...”

Chapter 893 - Spy

The flame of a thick wax candle flickered within the tent, illuminating the area brightly. Leylin, Rafiniya and the other team leaders formed a circle with Aulen in the captain's seat. The map of the Moonwood was hung on one side of the tent.

"This mission is going to be quite difficult. Do any of you have viable plans?" Aulen furrowed her slender brows, but the responses disappointed her.

"Leylin, what do you think?" She looked over to Leylin expectantly. As an army wizard, he held a remarkably high position. Besides, he had already proven his ability before; he was second only to herself in the team.

"There have been no further intelligence reports. I only know their rough position and the presence of high-ranked werecreatures within their team. In this situation, we can only reinforce our security and wait for the right opportunity to grab them by the throat."

Although what Leylin said made sense, it wasn't enough to satisfy her. Aulen knitted her brows once again. Leylin naturally understood her worries; he did indeed have a plan. However, it required Tiff and the devil worshippers, so he naturally couldn't tell Aulen and the team.

She looked around the room disheartenedly, before waving her hand to dismiss them, "Well, alright then. I'm sorry to have

interrupted your dinner, let us end the meeting here.” Despair was evident in her face.

“Don’t worry, sister Aulen! Justice always prevails, those damned werecreatures will not win against us!” At this point, the only one left who was full of confidence was of course the young female knight.

Ultimately, this was still a world led by physical strength. Rafiniya only attended the meeting because she was a high-ranked knight: it afforded her a position equivalent to a military officer who was a low-ranked captain.

“I trust you.” Aulen smiled helplessly, unable to find the strength to respond to Rafiniya in any other way.

“Leylin! Why did Aulen look so dejected towards the end?” Rafiniya wasn’t able to contain her curiosity after leaving the tent, “Is the mission too challenging?”

“No idea,” Leylin shook his head, and realised that the girl hadn’t been changed at all by prior experience.

“The fish broth is done, miss.” Rafiniya’s servant brought up two bowls of fish broth and the staple white bread, not forgetting the wild berries they picked along the way.

“Woo!!” Rafiniya cheered and began digging in.

Leylin laughed mindlessly at Rafiniya and tore his bread unhurriedly before dipping it into the broth and sending it into his mouth. He only called out to her as they were about to part, “Rafiniya!”

“Yeah? What’s the matter?” There were still leftover crumbs on the side of her lips, and she resembled a gluttonous little kitten.

“Nothing, I just have a premonition that tonight won’t be peaceful. Keep your weapons close.” Leylin notified her.

After going their separate ways, Leylin looked around to make sure no one had their eyes on him before sneaking into Aulen’s tent...

The silver moonlight was exceptionally dull this night, broken only by a few lone storm clouds that passed the region every once in a while.

The winds howled and temperatures dipped, and everyone else but from the patrolling soldiers had long ducked into their respective tents. Only the unfortunate soldiers on night duty were left to fend for themselves as they cursed at their luck.

Out of nowhere, a thick dark cloud floated across and swallowed the moon whole. The moonlight disappeared completely in the span of a second, and the only remaining light was from the handful of bonfires around. The guards’ line of sight grew hazy and they could only see things within 5 metres even if they sat by the bonfires.

“What a dark night... And such dense fog!” A patrol soldier grumbled.

“Come on! I’ve seen even scarier fogs in the endless wilderness, to the extent that you can’t see your fingers even when you’ve stretched your hand out.” Another patrol soldier replied with disdain.

“Well, you’re right!” The younger soldier nodded his head, but then he tightened his grip on his weapon, “Who’s there?”

A shadow approached them in the fog. “It’s me!” it spoke with a familiar voice.

“Oh, it’s the captain. Ma’am!” The patrol soldiers saluted immediately. However, in the instant they bowed, a few slashes flashed coldly in the night.

“Ack-” Fear and confusion brimmed their eyes as they tightly pressed their hands to their necks for dear life, blood seeping through the fingers. The collapse of both their bodies attracted no unwanted attention.

The hazy shadow seemed to let out a sigh of relief before arriving in front of another tent.

“Who’s there?” Leylin asked from within the tent.

“It’s me, Lanshire.” The shadow sounded calm.

“I see, is there anything? Hold on, I’ll deactivate the alarm!” The tent lit up for a brief moment and Leylin lifted the entrance open with confusion written all over his face, “Come in!”

Walking into the tent, the bright light carved out the figure of the shadow. She was slender, as thin as a thread, and wore a mask that covered half of her face. It was the scout of the team—Lanshire

“It must be urgent for you to visit at such an unearthly hour.” Having shed his wizard robes and wearing only a plain white shirt that revealed his firm chest, Leylin exuded masculinity.

“Well.. I have an idea with regards to the mission.” Lanshire’s voice was rather strange.

“Idea? Why didn’t you bring it up during the afternoon meeting? Was something preventing you from mentioning it?” Leylin’s expression turned dark and he took a step closer to her.

“Um, actually...” Lanshire lowered her voice causing Leylin to move closer towards her in an attempt to catch what she said.

Something unexpected happened at that moment. A bright silver dagger appeared in Lanshire’s hand out of nowhere as she mercilessly slashed at Leylin’s throat, the moment he was completely defenceless.

Given that she was a high-ranked assassin, there was only one way for this to end. Leylin would die.

Pew! The dagger cut into Leylin's throat without difficulty, but the situation was different from what Lanshire had expected. Instead of having blood splatter all over, Leylin's body turned into a huge soap bubble, burst in front of her and left nothing but a strong gale in its wake.

"This must be... High-grade illusion!" All colour drained from Lanshire's face upon realising that the Leylin she had just encountered was just a fake. She fled from his tent.

But things did not go well for her as she walked out into a group of people surrounding her. The real Leylin was wearing his robes neatly and was already aiming his staff at her, with a fully-armoured Rafiniya by his side.

And in the midst of them all, Aulen looked at Lanshire in disbelief and, of course, disappointment.

"Lanshire! I can't believe it's you. We've already been friends for more than 50 years, and you still couldn't resist the temptation of having power!" Aulen looked sorrowful.

"Friendship? Really?" Lanshire removed her mask to reveal a youthful face, but the remnants of a scar were still evident on her left cheek. It was like a flaw on a piece of art, completely destroying her beauty and rendering her rather ugly.

In a world of divine powers, scars like these would be easily healed. But the people who had gifted her this scar back then left a destructive power in the wound that deterred the healing abilities of any divine powers.

“Since that night, I’ve never been the same!” Lanshire laughed coldly before putting her mask back on with hatred-filled eyes.

“I see, you’ve never been able to let it go...” Aulen said in a sorrowful voice, “Who are you working for exactly? The werereatures? Or another faction?”

Leylin couldn’t care less about emotional entanglements like these. He stood out from the crowd and sent orders to surround Lanshire completely. Anyone who fought him was an enemy, and if they could not be roped in then he could only kill them. This was the code of law in the World of Gods!

“Kneel and confess all your sins! This is your last chance of survival!” Leylin stated fiercely, but he knew a surrender from Lanshire was almost impossible. She was a particularly determined avenger with a strong will. People like her could even drag others to hell with them just for revenge.

Leylin was familiar with unmoving fellows like these, thus he sent the command just as Lanshire smiled: “Kill!”

Magic and vindication clashed in the blink of an eye. Lanshire was just a high-ranked assassin, and though she could certainly

bring much trouble to Leylin and his team if things were done in the dark, an open face-off like this was obviously not a strength of hers.

Having cast Slow and with Rafiniya's help, Leylin brought Lanshire down in no time. She was stabbed in the abdomen by two enormous steel swords, and hot blood trickled from her wounds.

"Cripple her of all fighting ability! Jinx, treat her!" She was Aulen's friend, after all, Leylin still had some sense in him.

"Hah! I'd rather die than receive treatment from you! And do you think this is over?" Lanshire's mask had fallen off long ago in the middle of the fight. Blood trickled from the corners of her lips, and she looked even scarier than before with her menacing appearance.

"What?" Aulen's expression didn't look too good.

"Cap-Captain!" Just then, Ogg who had originally been in charge of planting traps and exterior defenses was carried in by the others, and it was clear he had suffered an attack.

"It's the werecreatures! Their abilities are beyond what we've imagined!"

Chapter 894 - Ambush

The roars and howling of beasts filled the vicinity, putting everyone on edge.

Lanshire laughed hysterically, “Hah! All of you will die with me! You can never beat those werereatures! Every one of you will be torn apart and then swallowed; your souls will be caged in the depths of hell!”

After spitting out her malicious curse, Lanshire’s face flushed and fresh blood spurted out from her mouth. Her aura completely disappeared as she died.

“Ignore her! Listen to me, engage defensive formation.” Seeing that Aulen wasn’t in a good condition, Leylin took over command.

It was only now that he found out what exactly had happened directly from Ogg, and began to organise the troops. In reality, everything that happened tonight was within Leylin’s plan. Firstly, he found Aulen and told her that they may have a spy within their ranks to win her support, which allowed him to plant the trap.

And to make things easy for the possible attack, the brothers, Ogg and Otto were sent out to be on standby.

“There were high-ranked werereatures, so many of them, I– I can’t be sure of the exact number, but my brother tried to protect me-He tried to protect me and-” Ogg’s eyes swelled red with tears

and his facial muscles began to twitch.

“Heal!” A spell flew forth from Jinx’s hands, and swiftly cured most of Ogg’s severe wounds.

“I’m gonna kill those damned beast bastards!” He stood up and grabbed his enormous claw hammer without waiting for his wounds to recover completely.

“Were you the only one who managed to escape in the close combat team? It looks like I underestimated our enemies this time round.” Leylin looked slightly ashamed, but a light flashed deep within in his eyes.

Whether it was done intentionally or not, the capture and exposure of Lanshire’s identity as a spy and her death had dealt a huge blow to Aulen. Moreover, the troops led by Ogg and Otto were now left with casualties, and Otto had even died; Silverymoon City would have to compensate Otto’s family for that later on. Jinx was a priest and under heavy restriction, while Rafiniya was a new member and did not have enough experience.

The event seemed to have cleared quite a number of obstacles for him, but Leylin would never admit to that. He would probably say that it was a coincidence!

By then, the werereatures were already directly outside the campsite, their mountainous shadows and the screams of the guards causing horror to tinge the atmosphere.

“Everyone stay close, we’re in trouble.” An Eternal Flame spell lit up Leylin’s palm, and he managed to repel a large amount of the fog. As the soldiers gathered together, he managed to see the werecreatures more clearly.

This was a humongous group with at least 200 of the monsters among them, six of which had exceptionally strong physiques and savage auras.

“High-ranked werecreatures, and there’s 6 of them!” Even the perturbed Aulen was now anxious. The werecreatures’ strength had greatly surpassed their expectations. If they were at all careless, their troop would be completely wiped out.

Suppressing her emotions, Aulen returned to her cool-headed self and sent out commands, “Defensive formation number 2!”

How could she not have realised that Lanshire had conspired with the werecreatures to kill everyone here?

“Lanshire, my friend. I’m sorry!” Aulen muttered to herself and drew out her elven sword, the shaft decorated in plant motifs. Its lustre suggested that it was an enchanted item.

Boom! Boom! Giant footsteps sounded out, and several giants that were at least ten metres tall emerged from the fog. They were like walking hills clothed in coppery skin.

“G-Giants! These werecreatures managed to tame giants!”

Aulen's hand trembled ever so slightly as she watched these human-like but also bizarre creatures, and some soldiers even yelped in despair.

“Giants? Those extraordinary creatures from the north?” Leylin massaged his temples in distress as data of the creatures was presented to him.

[Name Unknown. Race: Giant. Strength: 15. Agility: 6. Vitality: 13. Spirit: 2. Feats: 1. Strong 2. Regeneration 3. Armoured Skin. Description: A unique creature that only exists in the north. Cruel and fierce in temperament, unintelligent, easily tamed by other barbaric tribes.]

“Looking at this strength, they're most certainly connected to the Blackblood tribe. They might even be a branch! Cassley obviously wanted us to die.” Aulen laughed bitterly.

“Prepare to break through! We can only evacuate as many as we can.” She now seemed to have lost heart.

“Elf from Silverymoon City, and other humans!” A shadow walked out from the group of werecreatures.

He was 2 metres tall, and had an appearance similar to that of a human. The difference was that he had unusual beastly patterns all over his face, and certain body parts of a beast.

He choked in disgust after sniffing in the direction of Leylin and the rest, “Damn Silverymoon City! That is a place of evil, it should be wiped clean!”

As followers of Malar, the werecreatures were naturally hostile towards the civilised beings of Silverymoon City and hated all who dwelled within it. The city guards were undoubtedly their first target.

“All of you will die here today! You are all too worthless to even be sacrificed to my Lord!” The werecreatures growled, and more petrifying shadows headed towards them.

Werecreatures had robust physiques and a staggering jumping ability. The temporary barriers by the side of the campsite posed no deterrence to them. Roar! The giants grunted and every step they took was like a miniature earthquake, flipping tents and crushing soldiers under their feet.

“Damn it! Leylin, protect me!” The elegance of an elf was long forgotten to Aulen as her eyes were red with anxiety and she pulled the elven bow from her back.

Greater Magic Weapon! Leylin’s expression became heavy as the lustre of a high-grade spell burst forth from his hand.

Phew! Silver arrows went off like shooting stars, the spell-filled arrowheads hitting the giants right in their eyes, their weakest points. The giants’ defences still couldn’t match high-grade spells, and this was aimed at their eyes.

The giants roared as their eyes cracked apart in a soft explosion, copious amount of shimmering liquid and blood dripping everywhere.

One pressed a palm against his injured eye as he went berserk, charging towards Aulen.

Grease! Spell rays enveloped the giants as Leylin took advantage of this moment. He wouldn't be himself if he let go of the chance to target the giants' weakness.

Bang! Magnificent lights shot out of his hands like fireworks, and the group of giants immediately went berserk. Even the werecreatures were unable to calm them down.

Everything was in a frenzy as they roared wildly and attacked everything in their vicinity, including a handful werecreatures who were shredded into pieces.

"It's a high-grade spell attack! Get rid of that darned wizard, I'll dispel it!" A werecreature clad in a priest robe stood out in the chaos. He, too, had strange decorative motifs and paint on his face.

"Kill!" Aulen made use of this chance and charged forwards with Rafiniya and the rest. The only way they could survive under a situation like this was to go all-in. The soldiers were well aware of this too as they plucked up their remaining courage, following Aulen's lead and charging ahead.

Roar! The clash of the two opposing sides created a fierce orchestra of howls and clangs of steel meeting steel.

And yet everything was in vain. Aulen's numbers started to dwindle, and they could not win no matter how great their fighting spirit was. The werecreatures were just too many.

“Go to hell!” Having been enhanced by magic, the sword in Aulen's hand was brighter than ever. It could easily pierce through the defences of the werecreatures and cause unimaginable damage to their internal organs.

With it, Aulen severed the heads of 3 werecreatures in a flash and attracted the attention of their companion— a high-ranked werecreature.

“I admit you're strong. But too bad; you're still going to hell!” The werecreature priest suddenly towered over Aulen like a huge and tenacious mountain which she could not scale.

.....

“I'm your opponent!”

Leylin had already cast Fly, and was blocking the priest from saving his companions.

“Mid-ranked wizard, you’re not worthy to become a sacrifice!” The werecreature said in pity, and looked into Leylin’s blood-lust-filled eyes as if looking at his prey. It caused Leylin to furrow his brow uneasily.

‘I can’t be sure what other abilities this rank 15 or higher priest has. Hopefully Tiff and the rest will make it here soon!’

But of course, Leylin had more than one plan. He was also confident of escaping. As a wizard, there were countless life-saving spells. A simple Fly could get him out of the scene in a matter of seconds as long as he wasn’t shot down. Rank 15 wizards would escape death even more easily with Teleport.

This priest in front of him would just be a headache.

Chapter 895 - Taking Over

‘Although it’s possible for me to deal with a magic-based Professional at rank 15 or above, it really doesn’t make sense...’ Leylin watched the werecreature priest while feeling a headache coming on.

He was only a rank 12 mid-ranked wizard, and could not do anything that stepped beyond the boundaries of what was proper. Such a thing would attract the attention of powerful forces, which was the last thing Leylin wanted.

However, with spiritual force that exceeded that of regular wizards, as well as the scanning functions of the A.I. Chip, Leylin was able to discover some magic undulations that had been concealed.

He abruptly stepped sideways, turning left to dodge a sudden long green arrow. This corrosive arrow did not reduce in strength as it whizzed right through the body of a werecreature, turning it into froth.

High-grade Poison Arrow! Leylin looked grim, and the Mage Armour inlaid in his uniform activated.

“Why are you not in your Blackblood Tribe? What are you doing out here?”

“Hehe... that’s not something you need to know, because your head’s about to become my loot!” The priest opposite him

snickered.

At this moment, the situation changed again. Another high-grade werecreature suddenly emerged, launching a sneak attack on Aulen!

A dagger with terrifying black corrosive energy stabbed into her chest. “AH... AULEN!” Upon seeing this, powerful and dazzling qi burst from Rafiniya. It seemed to have a burning effect, causing the other werecreatures around her to back off as she took Aulen into her arms.

“See this? Your leader’s going to die. Give up! As long as you give up your faith, swear in the name of the God of the Hunt and join us, I can let you off...” Tempting words left the werecreature priest’s mouth. Perhaps he had also realised that Leylin would be difficult to deal with. While it was possible to win, there was a high chance that Leylin would run off.

“Hmm....” Leylin chuckled, and it caused the priest’s expression to change suddenly. Seeing the summoning rays light up on the opponent’s body, Leylin knew that his preparations had been successful.

Even as the priest looked confused, he suddenly retreated and activated the spell scrolls he had prepared long ago.

Magic Barrier II! Thorns! Summon Guards!

Immensely powerful spell barriers instantly cleared out the area, enveloping Leylin and his teammates. Meanwhile, a thorny forest rose swiftly from the ground. Heavily-armed soldiers were constructed from the soil, rising to confront the werecreatures.

“What’s going on?” After seeing the fall of the werecreature priest, a few leaders immediately headed over.

“Our base is being attacked. It must be a plot by those crafty humans!” The priest spoke in frustration.

The other werecreatures’ expressions quickly changed, “What do we do?”

The high-ranked werecreatures watched Leylin and the others within the barrier. While basically everyone had injuries, they naturally still were able to fight to a certain extent and had magic protection. While it wasn’t impossible to break through and wipe them out, they needed time...

In this period of time, their own camp could be wiped out! However, if they were to divide their troops, not knowing the power of the opponent would be very dangerous. Leylin’s troops were not the benevolent type.

These vile humans were of no importance at all compared to their own mission. While werecreatures were synonymous with brainless savages, the ones who could become leaders still possessed some level of intelligence.

“Let’s go!” The leader suddenly waved his arms, and the others quickly retreated.

“What about them...” One of them looked unwilling to do so, but was immediately shot down, “Just think for a moment with your stupid brain. What is more important, our camp or these humans?”

The priest was also in favour with this decision. As he left, he gave Leylin a deep look. “This isn’t the last you’ll see of us!”

“I look forward to it!” Leylin answered with a slight smile.

They retreated quickly. In tens of seconds, they’d completely disappeared.

Arcane Eye! After using a few detection spells, Leylin nodded in surety, “They really left and didn’t leave behind any traps...”

“Oh, we succeeded!” “Haha... I survived!” “I knew I wouldn’t die so easily...”

The ecstasy of living through a desperate situation immediately caused the soldiers who had survived to descend into a chaotic mess. Many of them even began to cry.

After this excitement, they looked at their camp that now looked to be in complete disorder, as well as their comrades who were dead or gravely injured. A soldier began to sob, and soon and all

sorts of wails began to burst out from the others.

“Ley-Leylin!” Aulen had a huge wound on her chest. Even with Jinx applying pressure and casting divine spells with milky-white light, the blood still gushed out. The bright blood dyed Jinx’s pure white priest robes red, making her look slightly disturbing.

“I’ll leave my brothers to you. Promise me that you’ll bring them back to Silverymoon alive!” Aulen’s lips were cracked, looking like a traveller on the verge of dying of thirst.

“What do I do? What do I do? This sort of wound needs a Cure Serious Wounds spell at the very least! I’ve used up all my divine spell slots...” Jinx sobbed. Clerics and priests that used up all their divine magic were even more useless than wizards without spell slots.

“I promise!” Leylin nodded grimly.

“Then... I can relax now...” Aulen’s hands hung down, her eyes closing slightly.

“Captain! Captain!” Jinx began to weep.

“She’s not dead yet!” Leylin was speechless as he pulled Jinx aside, a spell scroll abruptly appearing in his hands.

Create Water! Freeze! The powerful magic encased Aulen in a gigantic later of ice like an insect. There was still a look of shock on

her face.

“She might be able to hold on for a while longer.” Leylin looked serious, “Jinx!”

“Yes!” The female priest looked up, stunned.

“I have an important task for you!” Leylin looked at the priest before him, “I need you to escort her back. You’re our only cleric beside Aulen, only you can keep her alive... As for safety, I’ll send a few people to accompany you!”

“No problem!” Jinx wiped off her tears and answered quickly. After they lost Aulen, Leylin now had the right to command them all.

“Wait, won’t you go back with me?” Jinx only managed to react after a moment, asking in surprise.

“Go back? Do you want to be court-martialled? Cassley definitely won’t let us off...” Leylin looked serious, “I’ll stay behind and complete the mission!”

Leylin now had a noble aura similar to a hero, which touched Jinx’s heart.

“Oh...” Her tears began to flow again, “Don’t worry, I’ll complete the task without fail and tell the church of your achievements...”

As she was a cleric, Jinx was one who would not be criticised. She obviously believed that Leylin was giving her this chance of survival, which completely moved her. Leylin picked two soldiers who seemed alright to send Jinx and those who were gravely injured back.

After Aulen left, the entire squadron was now entirely in Leylin's control. With the priest leaving, there was nobody who would be monitoring Leylin, and he could now act without reservations!

“But this method... will it work? I've never heard of it before...”

Watching the large horse carriage with ice inside leave, Rafiniya stood by Leylin's side, looking confused, “Can using ice slow down the worsening of injuries?”

With this method, business at the shrine would pick up. Wizards would also begin to pay more attention to ice-type spells, but Rafiniya had never heard about this before.

“Yes, in theory. I haven't tested it out before though...” Leylin nodded.

“IN THEORY!” The female knight shrieked.

“Yes. That's at least some hope!” Leylin answered irresponsibly, and then clapped his hands to gather the rest of the soldiers.

Standing high above, Leylin looked at the few men they had below. The team had had less than 50 people originally, and with last night's massacre and today's injured leaving, there were only a dozen or so people left. It looked rather pitiful.

“You'll definitely ask me why we aren't going back...” Leylin's voice was low. Now, with the deaths of the many leaders and those who had gone off, he had the most authority here and was the only reasonable commander.

Of course, Leylin only needed this authority. It would be much easier for Leylin to just die than make use of these scattered remnants of a defeated troop. To get them working together, Leylin even spoke of what had happened before with the mission, as well as their hostility with Cassley/

After saying all this, he saw looks of despair in the soldiers' eyes.

“Yes. With Cassley around, we will become deserters if we go back and be sent to trial... Don't think about escaping, because your identification as free citizens as well as your family are all in Silverymoon...” Leylin's voice had a strange infectious effect.

“This battle is not just for yourselves, it's for your future! We must eliminate those wretched werecreatures. At the very least, we need to succeed in battle and return without blame...” The soldiers below were first bewildered and afraid, but flames were now blazing in their eyes. Noticing it, Leylin secretly burst into laughter.

Chapter 896 - Bestow

‘Once their commander was defeated, the subordinate stood out to lead their ruined army. They faced powerful enemies and obtained an unimaginable victory! Indeed, this is how a hero should be!’ Leylin nodded inside.

His thought process was completely based off some melodramatic models in his previous life, but it appeared to be popular in this world too. After placating the soldiers and ridding himself of Rafiniya, Leylin left the camp in the name of investigating the situation.

“Young master!” Tiff appeared from the shadows.

“Mm, you did well. What harvest did you reap?” Leylin asked calmly.

Leylin’s plan had two parts, one in the open and one in the shadows. In the open, he would attract all the attention onto himself, while in secret, Tiff had brought his men to the vicinity.

This is why he had allowed Lanshire to get in contact with the opponents and reveal the location of their camp, allowing for the attack. While the werecreatures turned out in full strength, Tiff would destroy their nest.

Meanwhile, with the perfect timing, they could also take care of the siege surrounding them. While Leylin alone could not match up to the joint attack of the high-ranked werebeasts, he would

crush them in terms of intelligence.

“Their camp was very strictly guarded and they recovered very quickly. We only managed to break through a part of the surrounding camp and did not manage to get to the core campsite...” Tiff looked serious as he produced a scroll with powerful spell remnants. However, it had obviously been used once already.

“Based on the traces on the outside, their goal seems to be to slaughter dragons.”

“Slaughtering dragons?!” Leylin froze slightly. Dragons naturally still existed in this world, and they were extraordinary high-grade beings. They were also considered a legendary species, purebloods of which could naturally become Legends upon reaching adulthood. With skin that was basically immune to magic, they were effectively the children of the gods.

The group of high-grade werebeasts had conspired for a long time, and it was obviously not to kill a few mixed-bloods or subspecies. They would probably target an adult dragon, a Legend!

‘Why would they slaughter dragons?’ Leylin pondered over this. While the heroes of human legend gained benefits and divine items upon slaughtering dragons, he knew that things weren’t quite as simple. The dragon race was very powerful, and they had their own backers. If one were tainted with the vengeance of a dragon’s soul, they would be pursued with hatred by the entire dragon race.

Even historically, unless the heroes that slayed dragons had strong backing, few ended up well. On top of that, not every one of those dragons were wealthy enough to rival a country. Wanting to make a fortune off slaying dragons was just a fantasy.

Of course, many werebeasts were lunatics, and they could not be judged by normal standards.

‘Could it be a ceremony for the God of the Hunt? A legendary dragon would be enough for the god to show his grace...’ With a god acting, the dragons could do nothing even if they harboured a grudge.

“But... What they would lose from this would be far too much to bear. Unless there’s something else that’s attracting the higher ups of the werebeasts...” Leylin muttered to himself and asked Tiff, “Have you found their target?”

He first unrolled the scroll Tiff had gotten. There was a map of the northern lands here, with detailed markings of the various villages, mountain ranges, forests and rivers. Even the copy Leylin had made with the A.I. Chip’s records was only slightly better than this, and a map with this much detail would absolutely fetch a great price in the northern lands.

On one mountain range was a little blood-red mark of a beast tooth, looking formidable and evil.

Tiff pointed at the mark on the map. There was a label beside it—The Nether Mountains. “I used Memory Retrieval used on a few

slaves, this should be their goal. The werebeasts have received intel of the existence of an adult red dragon there through various means. They aim to behead it!” he answered with certainty. While Memory Retrieval was thought to be a sinister spell, neither Leylin nor Tiff cared about it.

“Nether Mountains? The red dragon...” Leylin mumbled, the glint in his eyes brightening. All of a sudden, his eyes suddenly flashed as the Nether Mountains combined with an incomplete image of the map formed by the A.I. Chip.

‘A.I. Chip, show me the part of the northern lands where the inheritance of the Arcanists could be!’ he immediately commanded inside.

The A.I. Chip worked quickly, and a slightly blurred map appeared with a few tags. This map was something Leylin had copied from the notebook of the arcanist. Sadly, with the passing of generations, most of the map was lost even with the magical protection.

Leylin looked unperturbed as the A.I. Chip copied a version of the map from the scroll and overlapped them.

‘As expected...’ Seeing the location where the arcanist inheritance was and the beast tooth marking match up, Leylin’s eyes flashed with understanding. Tiff beside him obviously could not see changes in the A.I. Chip, but he knew that Leylin had discovered something. Still, he did not ask. This was smart of Tiff, and Leylin could not help but nod inside.

‘Red dragon... Werebeasts... The arcanist... What is the relation between the three? Did those werebeasts obtain clues of the arcanist inheritance? Or am I thinking too much, and they purely want to offer a sacrifice to Malar?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed with all sorts of emotions, but then went still.

‘Whatever it is, the werebeasts must be wiped out!’ Leylin made up his mind. He put a silver mask on his face, and his eyes turned a frightening red and white. Terrifying unstable strength burst forth from his body. In that moment, he changed into his identity of the divine devil.

“My lord!” Tiff changed his method of addressing Leylin, knowing that he wanted to hide his identity.

“Alright, let’s go see the underlings you recruited!” Leylin nodded, the glow of Fly coming forth from his body...

In a hidden valley, Leylin stood on high ground to look at the underlings Tiff had brought. Almost all of them were scattered around secretly, being of various races. The only commonality was the bloody and savage aura they possessed, making people fearful at the sight of them.

“Welcome, brothers of my sect!” Leylin now wore the robes of a high priest. His clothes that were lined with gold fluttered in the air, making him appear splendidly luxurious. Tiff stood behind him respectfully, emphasising Leylin’s status.

“The winged serpent god Kukulkan is a powerful and rewarding god!” Leylin scanned through these men who would be considered the trash of their races. They had no faith to speak of, and only believed in strength. This was how they were subdued by Tiff, “As long as you believe in our god, you will then be rewarded!”

Leylin saw the looks of disbelief in their eyes and pointed at a beastman wrapped in beast skin, “You, come here!”

“What is it?” The beastman had the head of a lion and a sturdy body filled with muscles and scars. There was a rebellious look on his face.

“You will receive the blessing of our god.” Leylin’s arms wrapped around himself as he moved in a modest and respectful way. When it came to acting as a medium, Leylin had nothing to learn.

Meanwhile, powerful energy undulations exploded from his body, filled with a dignified and heavy aura. Even the air was beginning to freeze.

“Hss...” A bundle of flames in the air turned into a strange giant snake with two wings. The giant snake’s pupils were trained on the lion-headed man, and a terror from his very soul got him to kneel, body quivering.

“My master, the mighty winged serpent god, Kukulkan. I finally meet you again...” Tiff who was at the side knelt down piously.

“My master is the only serpent of the world and possesses boundless strength. Your mighty divine force can swallow the heavens...” Leylin began to chant ceremonial verses, and a black ray of light descended from the snake’s mouth, falling on the lion-headed man.

Boom! The moment the black light descended, it turned into the most ferocious of flames for an instant as it wrapped him within itself. Miserable cries sounded out from within.

Such a terrifying scene left the audience silent in their fear. However, before they could even think that Leylin was reprimanding him, the figure of the winged serpent god and the black flames had dissipated, revealing the figure of the lion-headed man.

However, there was now a huge change to his body. His golden fur was now completely black, and there was even a black skull brand.

“Thi-this...” He touched his body after the transformation, looking to be in disbelief.

“My master has enlightened you with abilities in magic, transforming you into a sorcerer!” Leylin’s eyes were aimed at the ground as he spoke calmly.

“Sor–sorcerer?” The dark lion-headed being looked puzzled, and then lifted his right arm.

Demonic magic rays lit up on his body, and the black skull brand on his body flickered layer by layer. This was Summon Undead!

Crash! The ground split open, and numerous incomplete skeletons crawled up.

“It’s really magic!” “This is a sorcerer!” “How terrifying! He can actually bestow the gift of magic and sorcery!”

Amongst the stunned looks, the lion-headed man immediately knelt in his ecstasy, “My god, the winged serpent god! I believe in you...”

As a Professional who specialised in physical attacks, just a bit of magic would be a huge help to him. The lion-headed man sensed that he now possessed the power of a sorcerer of at least rank 5, and there even seemed to be a possibility of raising this strength. How could he not be delighted to the point of insanity?

When compared to the rewards, his faith was nothing.

“Winged serpent god... You are the serpent of the world and possess boundless strength...” The eyes of the others’ began to shine as they started to pray, voices filled with sincere piety.

Chapter 897 - Once More

‘Faith is actually a contract between gods and mortals. Mortals place their faith in the gods, and in return they receive divine skills. When they die, their souls will have the right to advance to the kingdom of the god.’ Leylin watched those fellows who were fit to be ordinary believers with bright eyes.

‘If they receive more benefits in return, they won’t hesitate to make offerings and worship even a bogus god. This is why there are still so many worshippers of devils and demons in this world...’

Of course, there was a limit to the worshippers that gods took in. They naturally couldn’t bestow their divinity without restriction, or they would make a loss. They could possibly lose a chunk of their divine force, even their godhood!

Leylin was currently in the early stages of building the foundation of his church. He had to give his first believers more benefits than normal. How else would he attract the faith of others and have them believe in this non-existent feathered serpent god?

As his main body was still in deep slumber, he was completely unable to respond to his followers’ prayers and bestow them with divine skills. In reality, that winged Targaryen phantom and the bestowal of the sorcery was all part of a show that Leylin had fabricated and performed with this body.

Given that he was but a part of the main soul, even Tiff wouldn’t be able to discover any flaws once he disguised himself. As for the

magic-like abilities, although those with bloodlines in this world could only rely on what they inherited, Leylin had no fear of bloodline transformation experiments. He was already a mid-rank 7 Warlock after all.

Warlocks had always been the best among those who possessed bloodlines. Leylin himself had reached great peaks in the use of bloodline energy, and to use a few captured bloodlines to manufacture a few fake sorcerers did not take much effort.

Of course, in the World of Gods, this was a miracle that only gods, demons and devils could achieve, explaining the fervent looks of these men. Sorcery could even be passed on to their children!

These benefits were attractive enough to make his subordinates gather around the church of Kulukan, and unite under its name for the time being. They were all ready to drench themselves in blood and fight for Leylin.

Another voice sounded at this moment, and Leylin's lips lifted even higher than before.

[Beep! Rank 3 Weave analysis: 100%! Host body has obtained all rank 3 spell models. Spell amnesia has been blocked automatically. Casting of rank 3 spells no longer requires materials.]

The analysis of the third level of the Weave had already been at the final leg, and now the conditions were ripe enough for it to complete. Leylin couldn't help but feel that the world origin force was watching over and taking care of him.

Gods always achieved success. None were unfavoured by the world origin force, and they were said to be the World Will's darlings!

'Seems like the dormant will of the World of Gods can't control the world origin force anymore. There's a vacancy for me, eh?' The edges of Leylin's lips spread even wider. "In the name of our god, let's make war!"

"Kukulkan! Kukulkan" Everyone's thirst for battle had already reached its peak. Of course, Leylin wouldn't admit that he had intentionally influenced this.

Within the high-ranked werecreature camp in the Moonwood.

"Damn it! There are actually other humans!" The werecreature commander ruthlessly flung a trembling werecreature onto the ground as he huffed.

"Luckily, only the outskirts were taken down, and they didn't reach the core camp!" The werecreature priest on the other side added coldly as he held onto his human bone staff.

"We need to tighten security across the entire camp, I'm ready to

carry out a large-scale sacrificial ceremony for our Lord's favour. He'll send out hunters from his kingdom to assist us." The lesser God of the Hunt, Malar, was a gigantic monster similar to apes and monkeys. It didn't get rid of most of its bestial characteristics after it successfully deified, and had a morbid thirst for slaughter.

The hunters were an exotic species in Malar's kingdom, and they were created specifically to hunt prey. The weakest of them was more powerful than a high-ranked Professional, and if the sacrifices of his followers in the mortal world pleased Malar, he would even open up a passage to dispatch the elite forces of his kingdom.

Although such forces from the heavens were definitely a little weaker as compared to an incarnated deity, the advantage was that they could be replenished without much heartache.

"Hunters?" The highly-ranked werecreature grimaced; the sacrificial offering required clearly cost him dear, "Our forces were already enough, but in order to ensure nothing will go wrong, let's go ahead with that! I believe... if we can use the legendary red dragon as an offering in a moment, our master will surely be very pleased..."

"Then I will begin..." The werecreature priest arrived at a miniature altar within the camp. This was clearly the core of the camp; it did not suffer from any damage from Tiff's surprise attack.

But the instant the priest entered the temple, his expression changed drastically.

Wooo! Wooo! Wooo! Crimson divine force poured out from the altar into its surroundings, the dazzling radiance representing some sort of special message.

“There’s an enemy...” The sound abruptly came to an end, following which an icy cold ray of light flashed past. With a blade cold enough to freeze the entire room, it ferociously thrust itself into the chest of one of the highly-ranked werecreatures.

“A thief who has almost reached the rank of Legends! It’s the person who launched a sneak attack on us!” The werecreature chief roared violently, and landed his fist on the ground with a thump. Powerful undulations spread in all four directions.

Earth’s Fist! A high-level physical Professional skill erupted in a series of invisible ripples, forcing a black shadow out of thin air.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! The silhouette bounced around nimbly, and ran several hundred metres away, his figure barely visible. The werecreatures he passed by on the way collapsed with their hands covering their throats.

“You won’t get away, despicable raider!” The werecreature chief had a fierce look on his face as he followed behind at supersonic speed.

But right when the chief was at the entrance of the camp, the priest’s voice could be heard. “Be careful, it’s a trap! He might have a formidable spellcaster!”

The reminder obviously came a little too late. Just as the werecreature chief came to a halt, a sinister figure with a silver mask suddenly appeared, with a terrifying spell instantly taking shape on his palm.

Rank 5 spell: Dragon's Breath! A powerful corrosive force instantaneously swept across the entire area, scorching the hair on the werecreature chief's chest.

"Damn it!" The werecreature flew backwards as a dark green radiance on his body flickered continuously. A powerful force was resisting against the corrosive effects of the Dragon's Breath at lightning speed. The werecreature priest behind the chief was constantly employing treatment spells.

After retreating more than ten metres, the werecreature chief had already completely broken away from the attack range of the Dragon's Breath. However, the average werecreatures around them were not so lucky. They all collapsed onto the ground, and the entrance to the camp was instantly filled with victims everywhere.

The crowd controlling powers of wizards were always one thing that commanders were most fearful of.

"Who are you?" The werecreature chief clearly didn't recognise Leylin, who was in disguise. Moreover, his opponent was formidable and nefarious, which made him feel as though he was facing his greatest foe.

“This feeling, as if he was devouring everything around him!” The werecreature chief’s pupils constricted. He now saw Leylin as the most dangerous enemy he had ever met.

Zoom! Without giving the chief a chance to even speak, Tiff immediately charged forward. His powers as a highly-ranked Professional, which were close to being legendary, burst out from him completely. His magic abilities flashed on his body from time to time, and he actually managed to forcibly stall five highly-ranked werecreatures although it was one against five.

“Kill! Argh!” A wave of troops charged towards the camp. An eldritch lion-headed person who was almost entirely covered in black led the front line. With a ferocious roar, a suit of armor made of bones appeared on its body, along with numerous bony pikes that suddenly thrust forward into the line of werecreatures that couldn’t flee in time. Fresh blood dripped continuously along the bony pike.

“Charge!” The army of scum instantly broke into the werecreature camp. They were from different walks of life and all kinds of races, but had been brought together by Tiff recently. After seeing what happened to one of them earlier, these dregs of society were investing 120% of their strength in combat in order to obtain the power of a bloodline and even let their descendants inherit it.

Even though their opponents were blessed by the lesser god of the hunt, Malar, they too were protected by the mysterious feathered snake god, Kukulkan.

It was undeniable that those who were chosen by Tiff were all rather strong and talented. They were on par with the werecreatures in the camp.

Mass Frenzy! Mass Healing! The werecreature priest hid somewhere behind as he watched the enemies solemnly.

The races that made up the opponent's army were very diverse, thus he couldn't think of which influential party they belonged to at all.

"Could it be that a new influential force is already emerging in the vicinity? With their nearly-legendary experts, this group cannot be belittled!" The werecreature priest muttered. He raised his hand and continued producing a spell which he had been preparing for a long time.

Dispel Magic!

A violet pillar of light descended from the sky, interrupting the werecreature priest and hindering him from casting spells. Leylin folded his arms, calm and unruffled in the midst of chaos, as he stared at the werecreature priest on the ground.

"Your opponent is me!" Leylin's eyes were ice-cold. Previously, he couldn't employ all of his strategies in order to conceal his true strength. But with his identity as a 'divine emissary', he didn't need to have any considerations!

He raised his hand, and lightning chains shot out. Pale blue electric currents bounced across the place, causing a few low-level priests to collapse to the floor.

When in combat, kill the clerics first. That was the norm in practically every battle, and Leylin certainly wouldn't sit idly by and let those low-level clerics leisurely heal and assist their troops.

After Leylin fixed his attention on him, the werereature priest suddenly felt a chill in his heart, as though he was facing a gigantic dragon. Vast amounts of probing spells flashed by, yet shortly after they returned with a message that made his expression change drastically.

“Divine one! Which god do you serve?” The werereature priest asked in a deep voice, scared out of his wits by Leylin's false godhood.

On the continent in the World of Gods, stronger beings who could obtain divinity were scarce. The greatest possibility would be that they were bestowed divinity by the gods. Evidently, this werereature priest considered Leylin as the saint of some deity.

Chapter 898 - Hunters

Communication between gods was an extremely solemn affair. If a powerful being was bestowed with divinity, he was bound to have an eminent status even in a god's church.

As for a subordinate of one god provoking another? That would practically be the beginning of a war between the gods! The werecreature priest began to feel rather dizzy. Although there had been conflicts and friction between churches and even between the gods themselves ever since the dusk of the gods, starting an undeclared war like this was a rare event.

After all, even a weak god would almost be unrivalled in their divine realm. Battle between two gods was a very grave matter, and it could span various dimensions and thousands of years!

As a cleric, the priest undoubtedly knew this. He watched Leylin with restrained fear.

“You had the cheek to covet our master's wealth!” Leylin's reply was very vague, but the werecreature priest's expression changed drastically. “As expected, it had to do with the Nether Mountains...”

Although the priest stopped himself in time, Leylin still got what he wanted. ‘Sure enough, these werecreatures are up to something. It's not as simple as just the red dragon...’

He didn't give the priest another chance to speak. Leylin moved

swiftly in mid-air, and the spells that he had been preparing for a long time shot out continuously.

Fog Barrier! Missile Storm! Fireball!

A layer of dense fog formed both a barrier and a cage, confining Leylin and the werecreature priest within. It prevented outsiders from intervening and probing them while spell attacks rained down like terrifying meteors with great destructive force.

“A presumptuous extremist that started a battle on his own initiative. You shall suffer from punishment by the gods!” The werecreature priest had a pious expression on his face. He seemed to be clothed in a milky white suit of protective armour, and a strong radiance kept emanating from his body.

Pew! Pew! Pew! Pew! The missiles rebounded off his glowing vest. It flickered, and eventually exploded.

The enormous scorching fireball struck the ground. Chrome yellow flames started spreading in all directions, continuously engulfing everything in their way. They quickly formed a gigantic depression in the ground that was covered in black scorch marks, as if it had been crushed by the bottom of a black pan.

The werecreature priest stood at the edge of the blackened pithole, his expression extremely solemn. The priest robes he was wearing had been torn into shreds, and he was almost entirely charred.

“Master, Malar, Please grant me strength...” The werecreature priest murmured. He stripped off his robes in one stroke, exposing his hairy torso. His muscles started to throb, and the dark scars from the flames burst open.

[Beep! Opponent has activated an innate skill, Wild Surge!]

A glimmer of light flashed in Leylin’s eyes. The Eye of the Hawk, coupled with the probing abilities of the A.I. Chip, revealed everything about the opponent right in front of his eyes.

[Wild Surge: A special ability of the followers of the Lesser God of the Hunt, Malar. Activation buffs strength and vitality by one point, additionally granting hunting vision. (If in the massacre state, the ability will bestow mid-rank regenerative effects. Cell activity will increase by 50%)]

The extraordinary Wild Surge technique was an unusual ability bestowed by the Lesser God of the Hunt to his followers, and its usage would lead to terrible aftereffects. The increased cell activity would drain one’s vitality to make up for the deficiencies, and the use of this skill would reduce life expectancy greatly.

But it was undeniable that this technique was still incomparably formidable. Leylin could feel the werecreature priest on the ground enter a strange state. Not only had the injuries on his body

completely disappeared, sharp claws had even shot out of his fingers. Even though he was just a clergyman of the Lesser God of the Hunt, he seemed to have transformed into a horrifying Hunter after activating the skill!

“AAHH...” The muscles on the priest’s leg twisted as he leapt more than ten metres high. His cold razor-sharp claws ferociously slashed across Leylin’s face.

‘So fast!’ Leylin’s eyes sparkled.

“Your greatest mistake was to falsely think that you could take me on alone!” Two white puffs of air spurted out from the werecreature priest’s nostrils.

“I have a premonition that you will be the most terrifying enemy us werecreatures will ever have! I must kill you here, and this little amount of strength is not enough! Not enough!” The priest roared. He suddenly pointed his claws towards himself, and ripped out a huge chunk of skin and flesh.

“Our god, I offer you sacrifice! Please bestow me with the strength to kill this foe!” The two clumps of flesh started to squirm violently, and then exploded. A temporary portal opened to reveal two enormous beasts.

‘Dimensional summoning? This creature does not seem to be from the prime material plane of the World of Gods...’

Oo Ooh Aa Aah! Oo Ooh Aa Aah! What appeared before him were two giant primates covered in green scales. They were over three metres tall, and their sharp claws were nearly a foot long. Their crimson eyes were filled with bloodthirst.

‘A.I. Chip!’ Leylin inwardly commanded. The chip loyally returned information on them in the blink of an eye.

[Hunter: Strength: 13, Agility: 15, Vitality: 10, Spirit: 5. Feats: 1. Wild Instinct 2. Poison Claw 3. Extraordinary Regeneration. Description: This is not a creature from the mortal world, but a beast bred by the God of the Hunt in his divine domain. It has been specially bred for the hunt, and has almost no rationality. If Malar is pleased with his worshippers’ sacrifices, he sends down these creatures to assist them.]

‘It has flesh, blood, and a life force, and it even requires a sacrifice of the soul?’ Leylin thought indifferently as he watched the light dim in the eyes of the werecreature priest.

“Kill him!” The two tall hunters at the werecreature’s side saw a finger point directly at Leylin.

Swish! The two hunters who previously seemed to have been playing a game instantly disappeared into thin air. Even Leylin with his powerful sight could only see the afterimages of their movements.

‘They’re even faster than the priest when he activated Wild Surge!’ Leylin rapidly ducked under the sharp claws sweeping across him, but a shadow flickered and another hunter emerged behind his back. Two arms twisted with muscles violently swept towards Leylin, seemingly wanting to tear him to pieces.

Bang! Mage Armour II appeared on Leylin’s back, buying him a second’s time. Once that was done the clothes on his back seemed to get shredded completely, the scraps flying up into the air like scattered butterflies.

Thump! Leylin hit the ground heavily, and dust and smoke flew up into the air.

Oo Ooh Aa Aah! Oo Ooh Aa Aah! The two enormous hunters surrounded Leylin, one on either side of him. They roared loudly together.

“You can’t outrun them. Hunters can bring out their utmost power while hunting!” The werecreature priest stood opposite Leylin, his eyes filled with a longing for fresh blood. He could already see his claws tearing across Leylin’s throat.

‘It deserves to be called a creature made by a god. I didn’t know the hunters of legend had such power.’ A crack appeared in Leylin’s silver mask, and he stood up as his body shone with a healing glow.

‘However, even high-ranked hunters still have their weaknesses,’ Leylin’s hands hung down, enveloped in his billowing sleeves.

“Kill him!” Having lost his ability to fly, the werecreature priest found it more beneficial to stay on the ground with the hunters. Both the priest and the hunters seemed to have transformed into black hurricanes, enveloping Leylin in their midst.

The formidable wind swept up several small rocks, smashing them to powder. As dust and dirt flew around the area, the three clawed beasts completely sealed off Leylin’s escape. They flew at him violently, and with evil intent.

“Even if they are a god’s creation, they will still have some defects,” Leylin sighed. In the instant before the clawed beasts arrived, he urgently used the Ring of Wizardry on his hand.

OOOOOOHH! A piercing and shrill female voice rang out suddenly, and in a moment overwhelmed their senses. The earsplitting noise was like that of metal scraping metal, and it brought everything in that space to a standstill.

The ear-piercing sound became an air explosion which pushed the three shadows apart.

“Ow...” The werecreature priest cut a sorry figure as he departed, blood trailing from his eyes and ears.

“Sound wave attacks? Wail of the Banshee? No, if it was that I would be dead already!” The werecreature priest was already in this state, and the two hunters were in an even worse situation. They rolled back and forth on the ground, letting out pleading

cries as if they had suffered an injury to their very souls.

“Wailing Howl... The power of this simplified version of Wail of the Banshee is rather good,” Leylin touched the ring on his left hand. He’d released the spell from his Ring of Wizardry a moment ago, pulling off an attack against his enemies.

Even a god could not create life, and those hunters were clearly hybrids that Malar had cobbled together from different animal characteristics and souls. Once they were attacked by sound, they immediately became violently unstable.

When it came to experiments on flesh and life, were Leylin to claim second nobody would dare claim first. He was the pinnacle expert of the World of Gods in that field. This was the pride of a bloodline Warlock.

“Very well, I’ve seen most of your spells and abilities. Let’s bring this to an end,” Leylin looked at the werecreature priest before him as dispassionately as he would look at a corpse, with neither joy nor sorrow in his eyes.

“To an end?!” The werecreature priest’s expression grew heavy, and his heart was filled with a dark premonition. A rune of a beast fang had soundlessly fallen into his hand.

“Up!” Along with his command, the two hunters who had already stopped their plaintive wails once again threw themselves at Leylin. The runes in his hand flashed with the light of a portal.

Chapter 899 - Absorption

Using its inborn sharp senses, the werecreature priest immediately felt a sense of danger— one that was enough to threaten its very life! Hence, it happily abandoned the two hunters behind to serve as cannon fodder and activated the transportation device it had to leave.

But how could Leylin give it the chance to do that?

“Dimensional Anchor!” Exquisite control over this spell allowed Leylin to destroy the werecreature priest’s transportation rays in an instant. Afterwards, the now-grim priest saw something it could never believe, causing its huge mouth to gape even more, to the point of dislocation.

Seven-coloured rays of light were launched from Leylin’s hands

Rank 2 spell: Colour Spray! The effects of such a weak spell only forced the hunters to pause for a while, but then they charged over again without hesitation.

But Leylin’s performance was far from over. Colour Spray, Colour Spray, Colour Spray ...

Nine spell rays flashed at Leylin’s hands as if from rainbows, each one cast instantly. While a low-ranked spell had limited effects, a large enough number would result in a fundamental change unless one was completely immune to them.

Evidently, these two hunters were swallowed up by these many spells, and they sunk into dizziness and hallucinations.

Flaming Sphere, Flaming Sphere, Flaming Sphere... Fireball, Fireball, Fireball...

Numerous rank 2 and 3 fire spells took shape in Leylin's hands, forming a scene like the stars in the sky. While they were all low-ranked fire-type spells, amassing them like this made them similar to the legendary spell, Meteor Shower!

Even the two hunters that had broken away from the attack before still sensed immense danger and retreated quickly.

“Consider it an honour that you're dying under this move.” Leylin smiled slightly. With the guidance of his spiritual force, the flames in the sky descended like meteors.

Rumble! Continuous explosions sounded out, and the two hunters were drowned out by the multicolour spells.

“Hehe... The internet in my previous world also had the five fireball school, where they took over the world with five casts of fireballs. But this isn't just five!” Seeing the dazzling flames, Leylin continued to let his imagination run wild.

Meanwhile, the werecreature priest saw the hunters who had exploded till there was nothing left of them, and now had a very

grim look.

“So many spell slots, and you can even cast them instantaneously? Are you a Legend? No, even Legends can’t do anything about the limit of nine spell slots...” The werecreature priest now looked to be in a complete mess, on the verge of a breakdown.

Leylin smiled at the priest’s reaction. Spellcasters suffered in this world; while they could use the Weave, they were restricted by spell slots. On top of that, Mystra took something from them every time they cast a spell, holding a part of their spiritual force. For this reason, a few wizards could only cast some low-ranked spells. Even Legends lost all battle power after casting a few legendary spells.

But Leylin was different. He had completely analysed the first four levels of the Weave, and there were no restrictions whatsoever on rank 0 to rank 3 spells. As long as he had enough spiritual force, he would be able to cast low-ranked spells instantly!

On top of that, he’d refilled his spell slots the day before. Leylin could cast spells now, but also had extra ones from before and therefore more spiritual force to spare.

This resulted in his terrifying abilities in casting spells. In terms of the number of low-ranked spells, he surpassed regular wizards by several times, and could easily use the power of his low-ranked spells to drown his opponents out. As long as the opponent was not completely immune to spells, he had nothing to fear!

Of course, this was his greatest trump card. If news of it were ever to spread, the consequences were obvious. Hence, all those who saw his trump card would have to die!

With Leylin's previous identity, he had not dared used this without thinking it over. Now, this werecreature priest was fated to die here.

Watching Leylin unceasingly drawing close, the werecreature priest now looked to have given up all hope. All of a sudden, his face twitched, "I know, I know! You're an arcanist. You must be an arcanist! Your companion is in my hands... I can... Ah..."

Terrifying spells flooded out once more. While they were merely low-ranked rank 0 to 3 spells, they were enough to drown out opponents. Watching the priest melting away in the flood, Leylin's interest was visibly piqued.

'What a surprise... I never thought a werecreature priest in a remote camp would know of the existence of arcanists! On top of that... a companion, huh...' It seemed like the priest had also met an arcanist before, and had even kept them captive. As long as he killed the priest, everything in the camp would belong to him. Why would Leylin bother trying to bargain with him?

The misty barrier dispersed, and Leylin looked at the surroundings. The entire camp was in chaos. Numerous werecreatures and the bodies of their comrades had fallen everywhere, the flowing blood enough to even form little streams.

Motivated by the great rewards, Leylin's underlings had gone all out, and they were all immersed in battle.

On another battlefield, however, even with near legendary strength Tiff was still on a disadvantage. He was facing five high-ranked werecreatures, and looked to be in a sorry state.

“Let's go!” With Leylin's arrival and the disappearance of the werecreature priest, the high-ranked werecreature leader's expression changed, and he abruptly waved his arms.

He was intellectual, and could obviously tell that his spellcaster had been taken down. Now that the other side's high-ranked spellcaster could attack as he wished, there would be a calamity. While he was unwilling to do so, he still gritted his teeth and sent down the orders to retreat.

But how could Leylin give him this chance? While he could not cast a torrent of spells again, as someone who was nearly a high-ranked wizard he could still turn the tables.

Greater Entanglement! Hold Person! Greater Vertigo! After taking a casual glance at the battlefield, Leylin flew over to Tiff's battle. Debuffing spells rained down like a storm.

“Damn it, he has so many spell slots? What's up with the priest? He didn't even make this person use up that many spell slots and died so fast!” The werecreature leader roared, but no matter how hard he thought about this, he could not guess the truth. He could

only fly into a rage and then welcome the attack from above and around him.

After seeing the death of the high-ranked priest, the werereatures' morale had already dropped, and Leylin was now even more ruthless. Considering the circumstances and taking one of them captive, Leylin then began to crush the werereatures.

Moon Bow! A dazzling lightning bow and arrow descended from the skies, piercing through the orc leader's chest.

Even with this terrifying attack, the leader could still persist for a while before it crumpled to the ground, exhibiting its powerful life energy. After the deaths of the spellcaster and high-ranked werereature, the entire werereature camp lost all courage to continue resisting them.

Numerous werereatures howled as they left, while some were hacked to death by some underlings who had gone mad in the fun they were having in the slaughter.

“Clear out the camp and maintain order. Prepare a few slaves, I have uses for them.” After handing the only surviving high-ranked werebeast prisoner to Tiff to tie up, Leylin did not care any longer and headed into the core of the camp.

The ground still had bloodstains that had yet to dry, and it was still slightly sticky when one walked across. However, the battle had ended quickly and the main infrastructure had not been damaged.

Boom! Boom! With Leylin's lead, the statue of Malar and the altar was destroyed. Traces of dim golden rays were still shining from the fragmented pieces.

“Even a true god will still have restrictions. For instance, they can only sense the surroundings of the altar up to a certain distance, and if they were to descend, they would need to cooperate with the priests here, where they would offer sacrifices or even trigger a holy tide... But there's nothing here at all. Coming down here forcefully would result in damage to one's divinity. Why would that happen for a few high-ranked werebeasts?”

Leylin guided the underlings outside, and only after Malar's statue was destroyed did he enter the range of the altar.

“Once it's completely smashed up, he won't be able to sense anything around it...” Until now, the altar had been the safest place. With a wave of his arms to send away a few men who were quivering on tenterhooks, he arrived by the altar..

“While there's no divinity here, I can still sense the God of the Hunt...” Leylin closed his eyes, caressing the shattered giant cyan rocks of the altar and sensing the divine force left behind by Malar. An aura filled with bloodlust, death and hunting lingered around him.

“While this is a lesser god, the accumulation isn't half bad...” Leylin sighed, the darkness in his eyes expanding, “Devour!”

Traces of golden divine force surged out of the remains of the ruins, and Leylin devoured it all. While it wasn't quite possible to grasp divinity like this, he could still ingest some divine force. In the World of Gods, gods still sent down their divine force to help their followers advance in their professions on occasion.

But Leylin was different. He was not Malar's follower, and Malar would not bestow his grace upon him. Since the god wouldn't give it on his own, Leylin would take it himself. This was the kind of person he was!

As the divine force entered his body, a terrifying, fragmented conscient slowly awakened in Leylin's sea of consciousness, turning into a huge incomplete ape monster.

Chapter 900 - Helen

Devouring divine power like this was a very dangerous thing. Even if incomplete, even Legends couldn't resist a divine conscient. If any idiot devoured the power of an existing god, he would either go crazy due to the huge conscient or get devoured by the divine force instead and become an incarnation of that god.

Yet Leylin was different. His original body was equivalent to a demigod to begin with, and he had the conscient and memories of his host body. He wasn't the least bit afraid of this incomplete conscient.

Hiss! An unnerving phantom of a winged snake emerged from Leylin's soul, glaring at the disabled monkey in front of it. Even if it was only a conscient, the monkey screeched in fright. The monkey screeched out of fright despite that it only being a conscient.

Boom! The Targaryen looked at the monkey with disdain before swallowing it whole. Leylin's body trembled involuntarily as the A.I. Chip made a report:

[Beep! Unknown energy absorbed by host body! Determined to be divine essence, near high-grade. Spirit increasing...]

[Beep! Energy fully absorbed by host body, Spirit+1.]

Leylin’s spirit force increased to a stunning 13 after devouring Malar’s divinity. His spirit was raised substantially, and he could make contact with more of the Weave.

Meanwhile, the A.I. Chip was still giving him feedback.

[Host body’s spirit stat has reached 13, host has advanced to rank 13 as a wizard.]

[Host has received one rank 6 spell slot, one rank 5 spell slot, and one rank 4 spell slot!]

‘Did I finally break through?’ Leylin looked at his updated stats.

[Leylin Faulen. Age: 20. Race: Human, Rank 13 Wizard. Strength: 10. Agility: 10 Physique: 10. Spirit force: 13. Condition: Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite, Elementary Perfect Body. Spell Slots: Rank 6(2), Rank 5(4), Rank 4(6), Rank 3(???), Rank 2(???), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]

[Weave Analysis Progress: Level 0: 100%. Level 1: 100%. Level

2: 100%. Level 3: 100%. Level 4: 56.77%. Level 5: 12.15%. Level 6: 0.01%.]

“A 20 year old rank 13 Wizard. I reckon there aren’t many like me in Silvermoon City. I’m almost on par with a Chosen now, though I guess I did advance with the grace of a god...” Leylin had fully digested Malar’s energy, and whilst the god himself realised that he’d lost some of his divinity he had no idea why.

‘Well, it seems like I’ll be entering an eternal feud with the God of the Hunt now.’ Even if he hadn’t devoured Malar’s divine force, Leylin would have made an enemy of the god’s church anyway. He had killed too many of his werecreature followers.

‘I’ll have to face a god sooner or later anyway. The God of the Hunt? Interesting domain.’ Leylin smirked.

.....

“My Lord.” Tiff, who was waiting outside the altar, was aware that Leylin had changed. However, he didn’t point it out. “We’ve detained and imprisoned a group of captives according to your orders and... I found something in the cell at the core of the campsite.”

“Oh? Bring me there to have a look.” Adrenaline rushed through Leylin as he came to a securely sealed cell with Tiff.

“I’m the only one who’s entered the place. I thought it would be better for few people to know about this.” Tiff bowed before positioning himself beside the door like a loyal guard.

‘Can it be...’ Leylin had a few guesses in his heart, but he was still hesitant as he pushed the door.

Clang! The thick and heavy door bellowed.

The light inside was dim, and it was covered in the distinct runes of the werereatures that gave off a barbaric aura. Leylin could tell that it was a high-grade anti-demon spell formation to block off contact with elemental energy and the Weave.

It evidently a trap, and the person within the cell moved suddenly and raised their head.

“You– You’re not a werereature!” They mumbled, so softly that Leylin could barely hear.

Cling clang! The chains scraped against each other as this prisoner moved, and Leylin noticed the unique cuffs on their hands. “Antimagic cuffs? Looks like they were really wary of you.”

Leylin sized the captive up—they were humanoid, but looked like a half-elf. Beneath their long viridescent locks were a pair of pure obsidian eyes and translucent fair skin. Their aura was distinct in spite of the long imprisonment.

A faint energy was emitted from their body, but restricted by the antimagic cuffs on their hands. It was clear that this captive was a wizard.

“A female half-elf wizard? Tell me, why did the werereatures imprison you?” Leylin asked.

“I heard screaming and slashing just now. Have you eliminated all of them?” The female wizard raised her head and shot Leylin a glance with her unreadable eyes.

“Hm, I guess you can say that!” Leylin nodded in agreement.

“Then aren’t you going to release me?” She waved her cuffs in question.

“Nope. Law says you’re now my captive, unless you have something of value to exchange for your freedom.” Leylin shook his head. “Besides, you’re a half-elf wizard, you should know your value.”

This was the standard practice in the mainland, but things were different in Silvermoon. The city’s leader was good, and if she heard of the situation she might even have redeemed the half-elf with her own money. But Leylin didn’t plan on reporting it.

“Redemption? Hah, I guess you came because of ‘that’ too. Ignorant idiot. You don’t know the suffering it will bring you.” The female wizard laughed, her eyes brimming with complicated

emotions. Leylin saw a brief moment of regret.

“Are you talking about the inheritance of the arcanists near the Nether Mountains and red dragon territory?” Leylin was sick of beating about the bush. And as expected, the moment he mentioned the Nether Mountains, red dragon, and arcanists, her expression changed. “So you knew.”

“Actually, I know more than what you think I do.” Leylin looked at her robe which was evidently different from the regular robes of other wizards and snapped his fingers.

A scorching light struck between her hands and melted the antimagic cuffs. Boiling molten iron dripped to the floor and sizzled, producing white fumes in its wake. But the female wizard had better things to pay attention to, as she stared at Leylin unbelievably, “Instant cast? It can’t be! You-You are an arcanist!”

“An arcanist? I’ve yet to become one, I just have a few incomplete arcane spell models, just like you.” Leylin smiled at her.

The use of arcane spells was obviously different from that of normal spells. The biggest difference was that one didn’t need the help of the Weave to use them, instead using the elemental particles in the air.

Leylin had made these plans long ago, but the A.I. Chip was busy with the Weave. Still, he’d managed to build a few arcane spell models in his leisure. The scorching ray that he casted just now was one of them.

Given his abilities, it wasn't impossible for Leylin to completely reconstruct the arcanists given enough time. Still, it could take tens of millennia. The transformation of normal spells into arcane spell models would be enough to keep him busy.

When there were ready-made ones, why would he continue to make them himself? Leylin's real interest lay in the research of those arcanists and the inheritance from those Magi who had comprehended laws.

There was more than one Magus who comprehended laws in the final war, and countless rank 8s who were similar to the Mother Core. An understanding of their paths and laws would be extremely beneficial to Leylin. Being a localisation of Magi, arcanists must have received the teachings of the ancient Magi. It was quite possible that they possessed information in those fields.

'Observing the different paths of law will be a great benefit. Though the ultimate path of every Magus is definitely different, it can at least give me a general direction.' Leylin looked at the female wizard as multiple thoughts ran through his head.

On the other hand, she let down her guard after seeing Leylin cast that spell. Her expression loosened up, and a sense of pity and reliance overcame her. It was as if she had found her own kind.

Bam! A ball of green elemental particles started burning on the tips of her fingers, and she made a bizarre gesture, looking cautious.

“In the eyes of the Arcanic Fire, I will comply with the path of truth and abandon confusion, weakness and suffering. I will succeed the path of the arcanist. The light of Netheril will never be dimmed. My name is Helen. May I know who you are, my Lord?”

Helen looked over to Leylin after the ritual with expectation.

“Is that how ancient arcanists greet each other? I’m sorry, but I really don’t know how to do this.” Leylin spread his hands out and laughed helplessly, “Honestly, I’m just an ordinary wizard who got some fragments of arcanist inheritance.”

After a round of confusing explanation and using the arcanist notebook as proof, Leylin finally proved his identity. Helen’s own origins gradually grew clear before his eyes.